

# COMPUTER ARTS

DESIGN  
MATTERS

ISSUE #265

SPRING 2017  
£6 • US\$16.99  
PRINTED IN  
THE UK

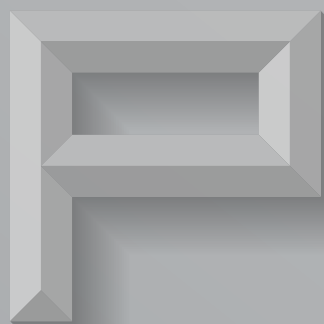
VIDEO INSIGHT

## 4 KEY RULES OF BRAND STRATEGY

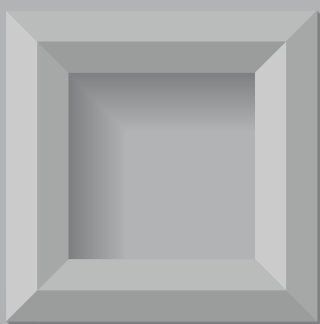
How Pearlfisher helps brands  
become more iconic

# STAND OUT

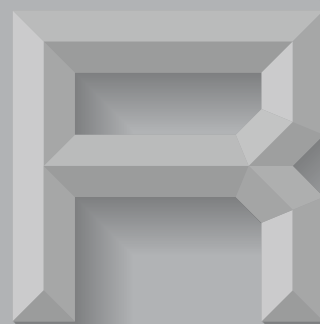
TAILOR YOUR DESIGN PORTFOLIO TO GET YOUR IDEAL JOB



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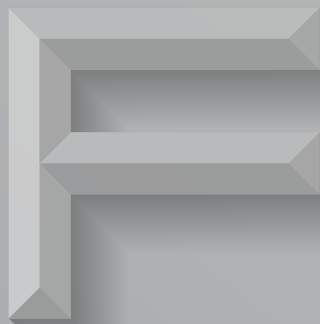
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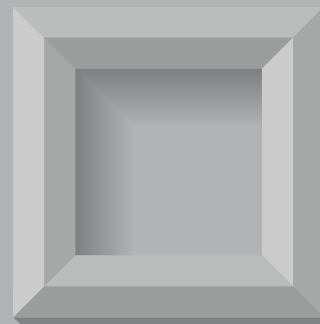
CURATE YOUR PORTFOLIO WITH A ROLE IN MIND



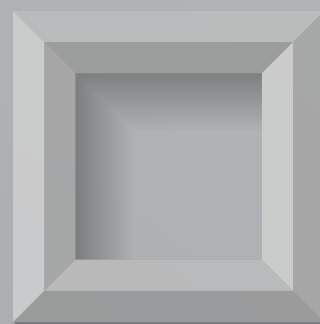
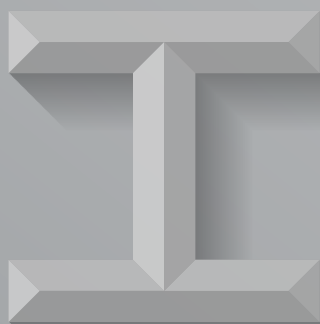
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# Making the cover

This issue, Computer Arts' new art editor Mark Wynne was tasked with creating a cover representing portfolios. But how to show something as individual and personal to each of our readers as a portfolio?

Mark decided upon a neutral, typographic treatment, based on a beautifully functional font from Shutterstock (by Rodin Anton), which features a gentle bas-relief, reinforcing the headline, 'stand out.'

A Pantone silver (with a double-hit fluoro as an accent colour) enhanced the slick, shiny conceit of the bas-relief, and the generous areas of negative space inside and between the letterforms were used to add some choice pieces of advice in glittering foil.

A last minute flash of boldness from editor Nick, who suggested turning the image off in favour of a blind emboss from our friends at Celloglas, made the visual conceit real, with all the added excitement, subtlety (and risk) of such a physical treatment.

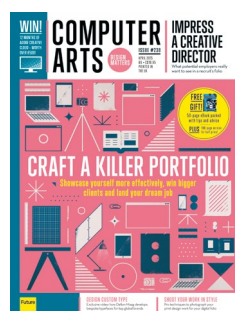
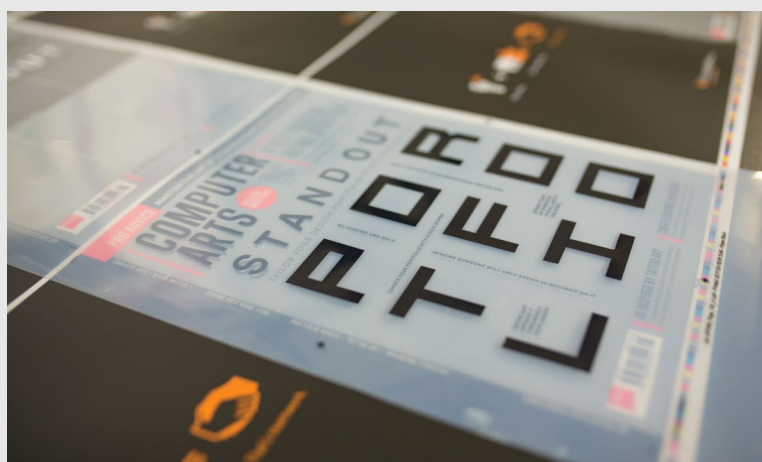
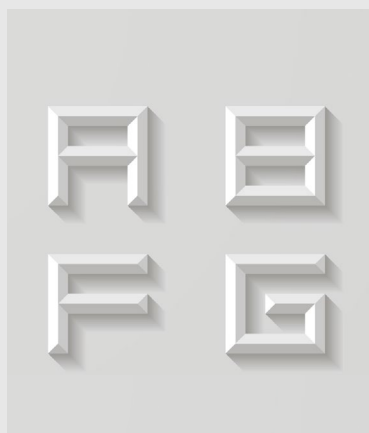
Watch the foil and emboss being applied at Celloglas in our making-of video – plus all our other special covers being finished – at [www.bit.ly/ca-printfinishes](http://www.bit.ly/ca-printfinishes)

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## MARK WYNNE

Mark wrestled with new management tools (hello Live Binder!) while plotting to embezzle extra funds to purchase extra thick cover stock for his debut cover. Wait... it's already printed?



## PORTFOLIOS 2015

Bagged with a free copy of Shillington's advice-packed newspaper, issue 238 featured an icon-led design by New York-based Gavin Potenza.



## PORTFOLIOS 2016

With a quirky cover by London-based illustrator Michael Driver, issue 251 challenged time-strapped readers to put a killer folio together quickly and effectively.



## PORTFOLIOS 2017

Add some sparkle to your life (and your bookshelf) with this month's glittering cover, featuring a blind emboss, silver foil and double Pantone action.

## Editor's letter

**Rather like beauty, the quality of your portfolio lies in the eye of the beholder. After all, portfolios are not primarily for your benefit: they are designed to win over a potential employer, client, or collaborator.**

With this in mind, this month's cover feature explores how you can tailor yours to suit the needs of the person browsing it. Whether you're a fresh-faced newbie going for your first job, or a battle-hardened senior trying to explain your involvement in a complex project, you'll find plenty of useful advice to get it right every time.

In a first for CA, we also delve into the world of tattoo art in our special report. This once-niche artform is making a significant impact in the world of commercial illustration, with many practitioners crossing the line between the two.

In fact, blurred lines is something of a theme throughout the issue – and was certainly a key message at this year's Design Indaba conference in Cape Town, where we spoke to information designer Giorgia Lupi about making data more beautiful by crossing disciplinary boundaries.

We also welcome our new art editor Mark to CA, having lured him across from the murky world of games publishing, where he art directed our sister title Edge. He's already been thrown in the deep end with a blind-embossed, foil-blocked, double-hit Pantone cover – welcome to the team, Mark.

Next issue, as the entry deadline for our Brand Impact Awards approaches (see [www.brandimpactawards.com](http://www.brandimpactawards.com)), our focus turns to branding with a pro's guide to colour theory, and we also investigate how to craft a brand's tone of voice – don't miss it. See you then!

● NICK CARSON  
Editor  
[nick.carson@futurenet.com](mailto:nick.carson@futurenet.com)

### KEEP IN TOUCH WITH...

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## FEATURING



### REN RENWICK

Helen 'Ren' Renwick is MD of the AOI and sits on the board of two arts organisations. On page 26, she explains why licensing and copyright are the lifeblood of the illustration industry.  
[www.theaoi.com](http://www.theaoi.com)



### OLLY ST JOHN

Olly is a graphic designer at NB Studio. He is also in charge of sorting through the portfolios the studio receives, and on page 44, he shares what it takes for a portfolio to catch his eye.  
[www.nbstudio.co.uk](http://www.nbstudio.co.uk)



### GIORGIA LUPI

Award-winning information designer, Giorgia Lupi is co-founder and design director at Accurat. She reveals why her hand-crafted approach makes data more personal on page 52.  
[www.giorgialupi.com](http://www.giorgialupi.com)



### OLLIE MUNDEN

Ollie is a lead designer for ilovedust and has his own studio, Megamunden. His work bridges illustration and tattoo design, and he explains how this crossover works in practice on page 60.  
[www.megamunden.com](http://www.megamunden.com)



### PHILIP HUNT

Philip is a partner and creative director at animation studio and production company Studio AKA. On page 88, he shares advice from his Pictoplasma workshops on creating storyboards.  
[www.studioaka.co.uk](http://www.studioaka.co.uk)

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## EDITORIAL

**Nick Carson**  
Editor  
[nick.carson@futurenet.com](mailto:nick.carson@futurenet.com)

**Mark Wynne**  
Art editor  
[jo.gulliver@futurenet.com](mailto:jo.gulliver@futurenet.com)

**Rosie Hilder**  
Operations editor  
[rosie.hilder@futurenet.com](mailto:rosie.hilder@futurenet.com)

**Peter Gray**  
Video producer  
[peter.gray@futurenet.com](mailto:peter.gray@futurenet.com)

**CREATIVE BLOG**  
[www.creativeblog.com](http://www.creativeblog.com)

**Craig Stewart**  
Editor  
[craig.stewart@futurenet.com](mailto:craig.stewart@futurenet.com)

**Kerrie Hughes**  
Associate editor  
[kerrie.hughes@futurenet.com](mailto:kerrie.hughes@futurenet.com)

**Ruth Hamilton**  
Operations editor  
[ruth.hamilton@futurenet.com](mailto:ruth.hamilton@futurenet.com)

**Dom Carter**  
Staff writer  
[dominic.carter@futurenet.com](mailto:dominic.carter@futurenet.com)

## Contributors

Trent Aitken-Smith, FranklinTill,  
GBH London, Jo Gulliver, Philip Hunt,  
Tom Manning, Tom May, Louise Pomeroy,  
Reed Words, Ren Renwick, Julia Sagar,  
Laura Snoad, Lance Wyman

## Contact

Future Publishing Ltd, Quay House,  
The Ambury, Bath, BA1 1UA  
+44 (0) 1225 442 244  
[hello@computerarts.co.uk](mailto:hello@computerarts.co.uk)  
[computerarts.creativeblog.com](http://computerarts.creativeblog.com)

## ADVERTISING

**Michael Pyatt** Ad manager  
[michael.pyatt@futurenet.com](mailto:michael.pyatt@futurenet.com)

**Chris Mitchell** [chris.mitchell@futurenet.com](mailto:chris.mitchell@futurenet.com)  
**George Lucas** [george.lucas@futurenet.com](mailto:george.lucas@futurenet.com)  
Account directors

## PRODUCTION & DISTRIBUTION

**Vivienne Calvert** Production controller  
**Mark Constance** Production manager

**Printing:** William Gibbons & Sons Ltd  
**Finishing partner:** Celloglas  
**Distributor:** Marketforce, 2nd Floor,  
5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf,  
London, E14 5HU  
Tel: 0207 429 4000  
**Overseas distribution:** Marketforce

## CIRCULATION

**Juliette Winyard**  
Trade marketing manager: 07551 150 984

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

**Charlotte Jolliffe** Campaign manager  
[charlotte.jolliffe@futurenet.com](mailto:charlotte.jolliffe@futurenet.com)

**UK readers:** 0844 848 2852  
**Overseas readers:** +44 (0)1604 251045  
**Online enquiries:**  
[www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk](http://www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk)  
[computerarts@myfavouritemagazines.co.uk](mailto:computerarts@myfavouritemagazines.co.uk)

## LICENSING

**Matt Ellis** Head of International Licensing  
[matt.ellis@futurenet.com](mailto:matt.ellis@futurenet.com)  
Tel: +44 (0)1225 442244  
Fax: +44 (0)1225 732275

## MANAGEMENT

**Aaron Asadi** Creative director, Magazines  
**Ross Andrews** Art & Design director  
**Amy Hennessey** Editor-in-chief,  
Creative & Design  
**Will Shum** Senior art editor, Creative & Design  
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## MEET THE TEAM



### NICK CARSON EDITOR

Nick spent two weeks working from his dining table during a major office refurb, a week in sunny Cape Town for Design Indaba, and returned to a shiny new workspace just in time to welcome Mark to team CA.



### MARK WYNNE ART EDITOR

Mark initiated a game of Design God or Not? in a typically bitter, dysfunctional attempt to bond with his new editor. Saville, Dadich, Turley... Nick's interviewed them all, which spoilt the fun a little.



### ROSIE HILDER OPERATIONS EDITOR

This month, Rosie went to see her idol, Laura Marling. She also discovered some new idols at Thread Bristol, and battled with hessian to make 10 metres of bunting for a friend's wedding.

## KEY CONTRIBUTORS

### PETER GRAY VIDEO PRODUCER

The lighter evenings and slightly warmer weather have given Pete the chance to get out on the golf course. It's one way to spoil a nice walk.... He also went to London to film Pearlfisher with Nick.

### TOM MAY FREELANCE WRITER

Tom's been a bit nomadic recently, as builders have been making improvements to his home that mainly involve ripping it to pieces. He's currently ensconced in a chalet at Pontins near Weston-super-Mare.

## Production notes

### PRINTERS

TEXT AND COVER CMYK, PLUS  
PANTONES 877 (METALLIC  
SILVER) AND 178 (FLUORO  
ORANGE/RED, DOUBLE HIT)  
William Gibbons

SILVER FOIL AND BLIND EMBOSS:



### PAPER COVER

Precision Special Gloss FSC 250gsm  
P3-74: Ultra Mag Plus Gloss 90gsm  
P75-98: Grapholvent 70gsm

### TYPEFACES

Trump Gothic West, Akkurat,  
Simple, Kondola and Calluna

🔍 resonance



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RHYTHMIC UNIVERSE.  
THIS IS MINE.**  
”

iStock Exclusive Artist **Bülent Gültek**



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SPRING 2017

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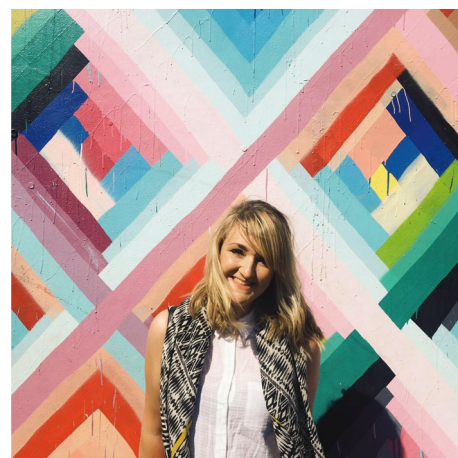
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# CULTURE

TRENDS | PEOPLE | EVENTS | INSPIRATION

Each month, our Trends section is curated by experienced creative consultancy [FranklinTill](http://FranklinTill.com) [www.franklintill.com](http://www.franklintill.com)



## TRENDS

# ARTIFICIALLY DESIGNED

Artificial intelligence was once depicted as part of a terrifying future where robots would enslave the human race; instead it has taken on exciting, useful and novel forms within the design world

**A**dvances in machine learning and increased accessibility to vast quantities of data have brought about a surge in design, manufacturing and products aided by artificial intelligence. With the use of feedback algorithms, consumers can now experience custom products that have been tailor-made to suit their personal tastes, styles and even medical needs.

The world's first beer brewed by data is now on sale and is awaiting your feedback. Created by IntelligentX, the premium beer uses machine learning algorithms to continually improve itself based on consumer feedback. Each bottle features a printed code, directing customers to an AI bot that asks a series of questions. The results are then interpreted by the algorithm and subsequently inform the brewing process, allowing customers to give feedback and enjoy improvements to products more easily, quickly and effectively than ever before.

Also striving to create the perfect beverage is Teforia, the kitchen counter tea-brewing robot. Teforia combines the knowledge of tea masters with advanced AI technology to create a sensory experience for loose-leaf brewing aficionados. Perfecting the ancient art of tea making is a delicate and complex process, and, whatever type of tea you choose, Teforia can make the perfect cup every single time. By reading the packaging, the device can determine the exact time, temperature and volume of water needed to create the perfect result. Teforia is also able to learn from each use, adapting its recipes to suit every palate.

AI-aided design and manufacturing are also having a significant impact on the healthcare and medical industries. Using algorithms and AI, patients can be diagnosed and treated more effectively, based on a personalised model of their biology. Boston-based biopharmaceutical start-up Berg, for example, is using AI to fight cancer. With a sample of the patient's DNA, the Berg Interrogative Biology platform is able to analyse the toxicity and predict the most effective outcome of all the possible cancer treatments, generating a personal treatment package for each individual based on real data.



AI BEER BY  
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## FRANKLINTILL STUDIO

### Design Futures / Material Futures / Colour Futures

FranklinTill Studio is a forecasting agency and creative consultancy that works with lifestyle brands across the disciplinary spectrum to provide research-based insights that drive creative innovations in materials, colour and design. It creates reports, publications, exhibitions and events with the aim of making its research both accessible and inspiring. It also edits and produces two magazines, published by View Publications, which you can buy from [www.viewpoint-magazine.com](http://www.viewpoint-magazine.com).

#### VIEWPOINT DESIGN

Viewpoint delivers visual, editorial and statistical information to brands, designers, agencies and consumer insight teams determined to create lifestyle products, campaigns and environments that anticipate consumer demand. Written by professionals in the branding and design business, each issue explores how a significant trend will impact consumer behaviour and the global design landscape.

#### VIEWPOINT COLOUR

Launched December 2016, Viewpoint Colour offers visual inspiration, design direction and a global perspective on colour. The inaugural issue provides an in-depth analysis of the personality traits of emerging colour stories, explaining why they are relevant now and how they are currently being applied.



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Build is a creative agency based in Leeds that helps clients to communicate, tell their story or grow their brand with contemporary and thoughtful design. Past big-name clients include Virgin America, Getty Images and Nike. <http://studio.build>

#### OUR DESIGN SPACE IS...

## BEAUTIFUL AND CONVENIENT

The founders of **Build**, Nicky and Michael C Place, explain why a pink plastic Ganesh and a slick wireless speaker are equally important players in the studio's creative environment

**C**reative agency **Build** moved into their current studio in September 2016. Housed in Tower Works, an old steel pin factory in Leeds, the studio is part of a 19th century building that has been renovated with creative, digital and media businesses in mind. It's near the motorway, the train station and the city centre, and is also close to the canal – the team are looking forward to the warmer months when they can take water taxis to other areas of the city.

Nicky Place, Build's business director, describes the look of the studio as, "a contemporary take on traditional interiors," referencing the

modern fittings, sash windows and wooden beams. "Tower Works is a fantastic building," confirms Michael C Place, Build's creative director. "It's ideally located, beautiful and convenient for the whole team – we're very happy here."

One of Place's most prized possessions is his fluorescent pink Ganesh (1), which he bought when visiting Chandigarh, North India. "I really love it as it's super minimal, just this squat blob of plastic in the sort of shape of an elephant-trunked God," he explains.

A less mystical keepsake is Place's tDR ruler (2), which he confesses to having stolen from the Designers Republic. "I used to work there, and

when I left to go travelling, I stole it," he admits. "It's been with me about 20 years now. I love that ruler."

Place also treasures his Letraset Catalogue collection (3), and has around 13 catalogues. "I started collecting them about eight years ago, and I am always on the lookout for ones I don't have." Place continues: "I first came across this exotic beast while at school when my friend Paul Kettlewell had a copy and brought it in one day. It completely blew me away. I had no idea what it was, but I loved it."

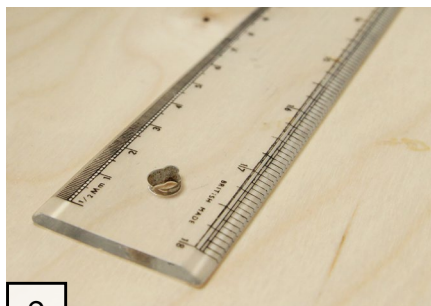
Also on the bookshelf sits a signed copy of Mode en Module (4), a monograph about the works of Wim Crouwel, which Place

describes as "the holy grail for a lot of graphic designers." Place got his copy as compensation for working a weekend while at tDR, and later had it signed by the man himself.

"Music is everything. I could not live without music, and I can't design without music," states Place, explaining why his OD-II by Teenage Engineering (5), has pride of place in the studio. "It's a re-engineered version of the original OD-II ortho directional loudspeaker, made in 1974." When Place arrives in the morning, he switches it on without fail. "We work through the day, it does its thing, we do ours. I go home at night, I switch it off. It waits like I wait for the next day." ■



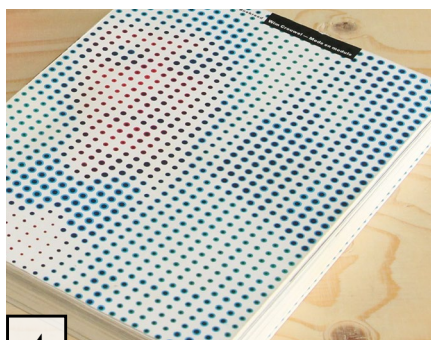
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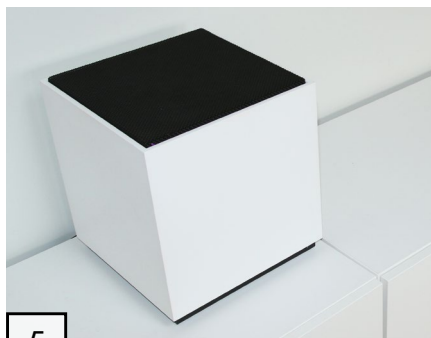
2



3



4



5



Bjarne is a 'creative digital entrepreneur and professional doer,' who now works as part of YEAHYEAH Collective. [www.yeahyeah.co](http://www.yeahyeah.co)

## NEW VENTURES

## COLLECTIVE CHANGE

**Bjarne Christensen** reveals why he chose to move from being partner and creative director at agency Stupid Studio to a new, ever-changing job role at YEAHYEAH Collective

**A**fter six years as partner and creative director of Copenhagen-based Stupid Studio (SS), Bjarne Christensen felt he was spending too long in meetings and on sales, and not long enough on creative problem-solving and projects. He decided to leave his job and try a new way of working with YEAHYEAH Collective (YYC). We found out more...

**Tell us about YEAHYEAH Collective. How does it work in practice?**

The idea at the core is to get rid of a lot of silly expenses in running a more traditional company, and be able to deliver fantastic work for a budget, instead of spending 50 per cent of that budget running a business.

We are able to put together the best team from project to project, and to ensure everyone works for the same purpose.

**How is the ethos of YYC different from SS? Does this affect the way you work?**

I would rather compare YYC to the traditional business model in the creative industry. We're organised differently to be able to share what's shareable, and focus on delivering the best possible work.

My work is indeed affected positively by the change. I can focus on things I really want to do. It's really exciting to feel you are part of developing more than a collective. We believe we're about to form the business model for future creative business.

YYC makes it possible to put together an interesting team. We've got creative coders

and designers, but we also have stylists, trend forecasters and research people. That combination of skills would never work in a traditional company.

**YYC doesn't work on projects for less than one month. Can you explain why?**

We don't believe anything really good can be achieved if we cannot work in depth. We work with people and partners, not for them. We believe that a close collaborative process is fundamental in innovative creative projects.

**What exactly will your role be at YYC, and how does it differ to what you did at SS?**

The thing is that the entire setup and the concept at the core of YEAHYEAH Collective is that we are all equal partners, with our own business in the business. So I can be a part of, say, three different projects, for three different clients in three different countries. In one project I'm lead designer, in the other one I'm responsible for the digital strategy, and for the third one I'm the product owner.

**Do you have any advice for anyone considering moving to a creative collective?**

You need to have the right mindset and drive. In many ways it's like running your own business. Make sure you get yourself organised as early as possible so you really exploit the benefits of being a collective. Agree on which expenses you share, what kind of ambitions you're aiming for, and how you are going to conquer the world – and enjoy your new life! ■





## EVENT REPORT: DESIGN INDABA 2017

# STOP CONFORMING

At Design Indaba, **Nick Carson** finds an infectious spirit for challenging convention

## KEY INFO:

## Location

Artscape Theatre  
Centre, Cape Town  
[www.designindaba.com](http://www.designindaba.com)

## When

1–3 March 2017

## Attendees

2,600 (3,600 total  
including simulcasts)

## Key speakers

Marina Willer, Kate  
Moross, Giorgia  
Lupi, Chris Sheldrick  
(what3words), Olafur  
Eliasson, Joe Gebbia  
(Airbnb), Tea Uglow  
(Google), Sneheta

**E**very year, Design Indaba takes over Cape Town with an explosion of energy that transcends disciplines, borders and cultures, delivering thought-provoking insights that spur the audience to action.

MC'd as ever by Pentagram's Michael Bierut and friends, the three-day conference delivered a fascinating blend of speakers from graphic design, architecture, fashion, art, furniture and more.

Based in an arts hub, rather than a convention centre, Design Indaba has a theatricality that turns the 'conference' norm on its head:

for instance, South African duo Dokter and Misses kicked things off with a trio of dancers dressed as Bauhaus shapes.

Later, London-based furniture designer Yinka Ilori payed homage to his African heritage by throwing a Nigerian house party on stage, while French-born innovator Nelly Ben Hayoun began her whimsical tale of discovery with a Viking warrior facing a scientist in a boxing ring, and ended with the audience pushing her off stage in a giant cardboard longboat.

Every day was wrapped up by New York-based rap collective

Freestyle Love Supreme, who spun an incredible improv out of words drawn from the audience.

Such twists on the usual conference format set the stage for a key theme: the link between non-conformity and innovation.

For Tea Uglow, creative director of Google Creative Lab in Sydney, innovation is all about blurring boundaries. She began by talking about a personal embodiment of that: being transgender.

She discussed various projects, including Editions at Play – which revolutionises how we engage with digital books – and Ghosts, Toast



## EVENT REPORT: THREAD BRISTOL

## HARD GRAFT

Rosie Hilder discovers the value of manual labour at Thread Bristol

**T**he two speakers at the latest edition of Thread Bristol are certainly no strangers to hard work. Both paper artist Hattie Newman and Hey Studio's founder, Veronica Fuerte, talked of days spent working on fiddly projects that verge on the ridiculous. Newman told stories of having to paint a model's breasts at a photo shoot as she didn't have time to finish the paper dress she'd crafted, and how her eight-second Lacoste advert was a year in the making, while Fuerte spoke of spending a week on a 2x2cm illustration for *Monocle*, sticking ribbon onto hundreds of handmade invitations, and creating an illustrated map of an entire Chinese district with only Google for reference.

But despite all these hours of labour, both women delight in the handmade. "I don't really use a laser cutter," admitted Newman, who confessed to being "not very good with computers." Doing things by hand does have its perils, however. "My assistant cut her finger off and put it in the bin!" exclaimed Newman, before assuring the audience that another assistant dealt with it while she was "trying not to faint over the blood." Real physical work also takes up a lot more space than files saved on the computer, and Newman is often stumped as to what to do with her paper models once they've served their purpose. "I decided to sell the buildings from my Canon City installation," she said, "but the profits go to War Child, so I'm not making any money!"

Not making any money or having any space are both things Fuerte is all too familiar with. "Our old studio was very small!" she laughed. "We did photoshoots in there but there wasn't any space."

"At the beginning, it's not easy," warned Fuerte. "You need to work a lot, with all kinds of clients, even if you don't like them or the work. But over time, you can start to choose what you do and who you work with." And as someone who began designing in her flat with a baby, Fuerte certainly knows the benefit of having that choice. ■

**Clockwise from far left:** Rap collective Freestyle Love Supreme sum up the day; Marko Ahtisaari debates the curative power of music; guitarist Kaki King joined Giorgia Lupi on stage (see page 52); Duolingo founder Luis von Ahn.



and the Things Unsaid, a VR theatre experience filmed in 360 degrees. "Context changes content," she declared. "Reality is highly fallible."

Uglo saluted fellow speaker Kate Moross, who had earlier described herself as nonbinary and gender-fluid – "I live life in the middle," she declared. Refusal to conform makes you unique, Moross said. Blend that with talent and you have a potent combination.

Others reaping the benefits of thinking differently included Marko Ahtisaari, former head of design at Nokia, who co-founded the Sync Project: an exciting start-up dedicated to exploring the physiological effects of music.

According to Ahtisaari, music can affect the brain in a similar way to certain pharmaceuticals, stimulating emotion, arousal and social affiliation, as well as having

an impact on sleep patterns, relaxation and even pain control.

His ambition? To prove, in the face of a cultural dependence on medication, the value of "non-drug modalities with drug-like effects."

what3words founder Chris Sheldrick revealed the bold thinking behind his Black Pencil-winning project, which splits the globe into a grid of over 50 trillion three-metre squares, each with their own unique three-word identifier, while Duolingo creator Luis von Ahn discussed how the language app turn conventional education on its head by gamifying the process.

According to von Ahn, more people use Duolingo to learn a foreign language in the States than in the entire US public school system, a staggering statistic that shows just how effective game-changing innovation can be. ■





## EVENT REPORT: OFFSET DUBLIN 2017

## KEY INFO:

## Location

Bord Gáis Energy  
Theatre, Dublin  
[www.iloveoffset.com](http://www.iloveoffset.com)

## When

17–19 February 2017

## Attendees

2,500

## Key speakers

Mirko Borsche,  
Kelli Anderson,  
Bruno Maag, Marion  
Deuchars, Dan Perri,  
Rod Hunt, Nils Leonard

## JUST DO YOU

A big theme at Dublin's premier creative festival this year was to make your own way, as **Julia Sagar** finds out

**OFFSET** Dublin kicked off this year's creative calendar with a lively line-up of speakers, and busy schedule of industry-related discussion and debate. Graphic designer Mirko Borsche, type expert Bruno Maag, illustrator Marion Deuchars and film title pro Dan Perri were among the headliners, while Steve Simpson and Annie Atkins headed up an inspiring programme of workshops during OFFSET's fringe festival, OFFSITE.

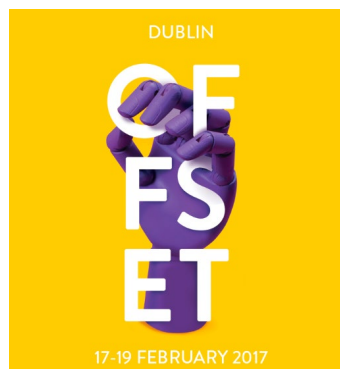
One recurring theme noticed by speaker and designer Kelli Anderson was that of humanness,

or human expression. "A lot of work celebrated the imperfect, touchable, warm, handmade and idiosyncratically expressive," she reflects. "Kirsten Lepore's stop-motion animation stood out as being particularly chock-full of tiny observed nuances about people, which made it relatable and hilarious – to the point of extreme awkwardness in some cases, like with her short film, *Hi Stranger*."

She continues: "Marion Deuchars also discussed how she abandoned the 'correct' way to do calligraphy for her more exuberant style. It makes it a more direct expression of her charming self."

Deuchars' willingness to celebrate human imperfection and sense of experimentation feeds directly into her books – a point highlighted by illustrator Rod Hunt, whose key take-home message from OFFSET this year was to set more time aside to create self-initiated work. Rod opened this year's conference, taking to the stage on Friday morning to discuss the business of problem-solving.

As he explained, he doesn't view his illustration work as art, or related to having a style as such: it's all about solving the problem presented by the brief. His message to the 2,500-strong audience was



**Clockwise from far left:** Bruno Maag talking deadline drama on the second stage; attendees at OFFSET; this year's branding; Kelli Anderson on the main stage; a packed audience in the Bord Gáis Energy Theatre.



to think big and aim high. "Careers don't often happen overnight," he says, "so don't wait for things to come to you. Make your own luck by getting out there and showing people your work," he advised.

For Bruno Maag, OFFSET provided a timely reminder of the power of motion design. "I very much enjoyed the number of motion design contributions, ranging from blockbuster movie sequences to *Danger Mouse*," he recalls. "Seeing and hearing about it in a more isolated fashion reminded me how powerful it can be when employed correctly."

He came away from the conference armed with resolve to use motion as a tool to further engage with his audiences when he's talking about typography. "It will allow me to emphasise a point I'm trying to make, or illustrate a specific subject more interactively.

*Careers don't often happen overnight,  
so don't wait for things to come to you.*

*Make your own luck by getting out  
there and showing people your work*

**Rod Hunt, freelance illustrator**

Motion can be used very effectively when it's juxtaposed with static imagery," he explains.

Like Anderson, Maag also picked up on the conference's human theme. "Lorna Ross from the agency Fjord stood out for me," he says. "'Extreme experiences' was a term she used to describe the fact that you can't rely on your assumptions when it comes to what people experience. Instead, you have to immerse yourself in their world

to understand things from their perspective," he continues.

For Anderson, humanness also means knowing what you want to personally achieve as a designer. "The resounding takeaway seemed to be: 'Just do you,'" she says. "Don't try to shoehorn your creative ambitions into someone else's career, style, expectations or goals. The question isn't: 'How can I fit in?' The real question is: 'What unique thing can I contribute?'" ■

## WHAT'S ON

## EVENTS

### ING Creative Festival 2017

■ Dubai, UAE

■ 13–15 April

[www.ingcreatives.com](http://www.ingcreatives.com)

Speakers from Pixar, Disney, Google, Behance, National Geographic and more join the likes of Design Matters' Debbie Millman and Hvass&Hannibal's Nan Na Hvass in Dubai for ING Creative Festival in April. The three-day conference also offers a wide range of workshops, from lettering with Gemma O'Brien to storytelling with Pixar's Andrew Gordon.

### D&AD Festival

■ London, UK

■ 25–27 April

[www.dandad.org](http://www.dandad.org)

Back for a second year, D&AD's sprawling festival will celebrate creative excellence across a dizzying variety of outlets. Talks from leading creatives, such as Piera Luisa Gelardi and Zane Lowe, will occur alongside insights from the D&AD Professional Awards judges, an exhibition of more than 26,000 pieces of work, fringe events, workshops and parties.

### TYPO Berlin

■ Berlin, Germany

■ 25–27 May

[www.typtalks.com/berlin](http://www.typtalks.com/berlin)

Themed 'wanderlust', this year's TYPO Berlin will focus on 'methodological agility', and aims to facilitate a rethinking in how we leave our comfort zones and embrace the joy of change. Talks will take place across five stages at arts venue House of World Cultures, and speakers include Jonathan Ford, Rejane Dal Bello, Oliver Jeffers, Horst's Eike König and Erik Spiekermann.



## INSPIRATION FEED

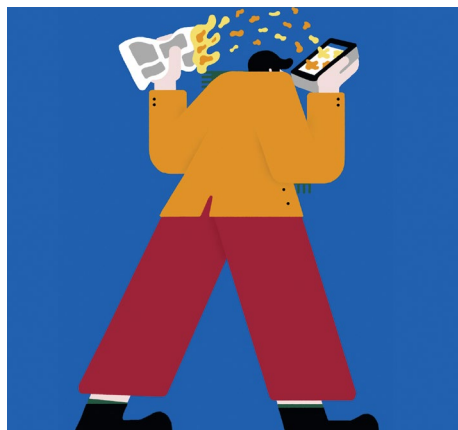
# Sergio Membrillas

Sergio Membrillas is a freelance illustrator living in Valencia, who says he is "trying to learn, see and consume all the beauty I can." Membrillas takes pictures of everything and anything that he likes or finds inspiring, and is obsessed with poring over photography books. "Photography is like a sacred hobby for me," he says. Using Instagram has meant Membrillas now takes more photos, and over time he's become braver in sharing his images and begun to feel proud of being part of the photography field.

"What I like about Instagram is that you can share with others what your universe is made of," he states. "I like architecture, product design, interiors and mid-century furniture, and in a way my feed feels like a representative part of my world." Membrillas also points out that Instagram can help to build on work too, as it paints a picture of your visual character and work. "Overall, Instagram is just a good way to share your life a bit, and the things, places, people and activities that surround you," he smiles.

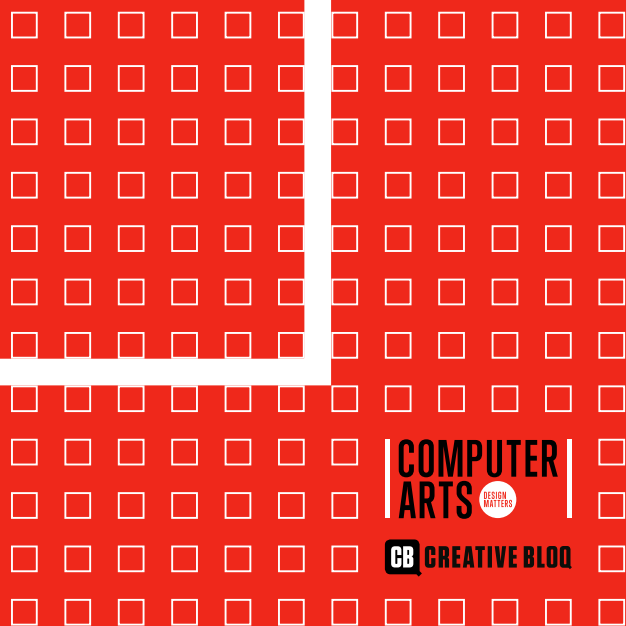


[www.instagram.com/sergiomembrillas](http://www.instagram.com/sergiomembrillas)



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Sagmeister & Walsh



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[www.brandimpactawards.com](http://www.brandimpactawards.com)

# INSIGHT

*Strong opinion and analysis from across the global design industry*



**GBH LONDON**  
CREATIVE AGENCY  
[www.gbh.london](http://www.gbh.london)

*Jason Gregory, Mark Bonner and Peter Hale are the co-founders of design studio GBH. Their new book, Charm, Belligerence & Perversity, showcases the work and opinions of the award-winning agency.*



**REN RENWICK**  
MANAGING DIRECTOR  
THE AOI  
[www.theaoi.com](http://www.theaoi.com)

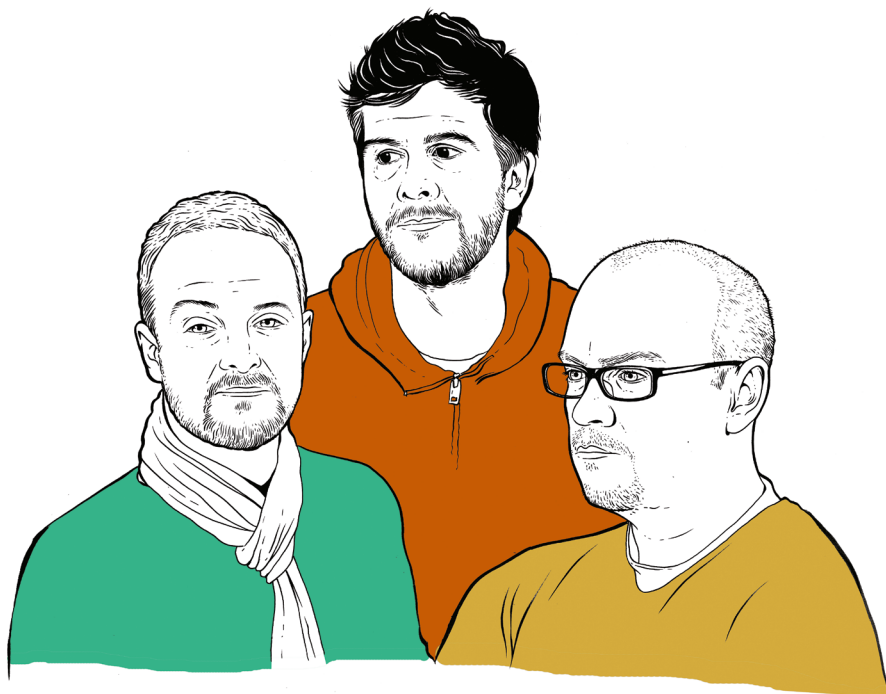
*Helen Renwick (Ren) is MD of the AOI. She sits on two arts organisation boards, and enjoys balancing work and parenthood. She explains why licensing is the lifeblood of the illustration industry on page 26.*

**DESIGN MATTERS:** What's the best advice you've been given on your portfolio? Page 25

**PLUS:** Three perspectives on Brand New's recent rebrand – page 28

**Illustrations:**  
Louise Pomeroy  
[www.louisezpomeroy.com](http://www.louisezpomeroy.com)

## ESSAY



# How do you measure success?

The three founders of GBH London discuss what it truly means to be successful in a 'cannibalistic' industry



**S**uccess. What the hell is that? Is it about money? Is it a state of mind? A zen-like tranquillity, born of rock solid self-confidence? Is it a shelf full of semi-precious metal from our peers? Is it fame, notoriety, early retirement? Or is it that deep sense of personal satisfaction that only comes from sitting under a broad oak tree at the end of a particularly hard day of manual labour, with an ice-cold beer and an achingly sore back?

Does it come from a moral satisfaction that we've mattered? That we've helped others, made a difference, done some good? Is it a body of work that's stood the test of time, or is it a deep rooted desire to be a pioneer? Oscar or Nobel Peace prize? Fame or notoriety? Your money or your life?

A creative person's quest for satisfaction never, ever stops. On and on we go, relentless in the pursuit of perfection. 'I want it to work, to be the best thing I've ever done, to be the best anyone's ever done. I want to do it again, only better. I want to make a dent, I want to be the greatest designer/art director/painter/photographer/ad-man of all time.' Jeez. We need to get over ourselves.

All of this starts with an age-old desire to be noticed, to earn our stripes. Perhaps we weren't top at school, but we're not alone. Most 'right-brainers' have an academic deficiency of some sort or another. Many creatives are dyslexic, for example. We have to find another way to impress, to succeed. For most of us, 'this' is the only thing we're very good at. Everything else is learned behaviour. Writing, strategy, presentation and people skills, diplomacy, politics, financial savvy, managing staff, resource planning, project management, business plans, setting budgets and targets, accounting, salesmanship, collaboration, competition. It's all learned, and we have the scars to prove it.

But being creative, that's natural. A God-given talent they say. We can think and we can draw, no one can teach that, can they?

When one of us at GBH first realised he could draw, he quickly realised he could earn. We're not sure what this says about us, but he charged his classmates to draw Star Wars Stormtroopers or sportswear brand logos on their school exercise books. Adidas, Fila, Ellesse, Puma. How ironic it is that 30 years later we've ended up charging Puma to draw Puma logos? It's funny how life comes full circle.

He had a little mini-business doing it when he was 12, under the school radar. He got pretty good at it and he got a lot of pleasure from it, a little bit of fame even. It got him into trouble, which was kinda cool, and he even got paid. In fact, his 'talent' opened him up to all the things that we thrive on today as creatives. We become addicted to being good because it helps us to stand out and to be liked.

It's our mums who noticed first. She began by putting our drawings on the fridge. She never put our brother's or sister's drawings on the fridge. This made us unpopular with our brothers and sisters, but that was pretty cool when we were eight or nine. We were the chosen ones. It made us feel six feet tall. We got so used to this modest adulation that we craved it. We started producing more and more drawings. She had to get smart, so she became selective, otherwise she couldn't see the fridge anymore. We all remember her standing over a curious line-up of our handiwork, a perfect storm of early '60s, '70s, '80s or even '90s nostalgia in mixed media: felt-tip, biro and coloured pencil, depending on our age. She would run the rule, she had her own criteria. She'd decide which were good enough, and which were not. We started to learn what she liked, what she wanted. That's where the fun started. From school, we found college, and from the fridge we found international advertising and design award schemes. What were we looking for? Satisfaction, fame, to be noticed, a place in our profession's history. Or is the perfection we pursue just a muse, an allegory for our own quest for happiness?

There's something deeply satisfying, gratifying even, about standing out. We think creative people find that this need comes naturally – a virtuous circle if you like. Since a young age, we've been finding our voice, honing our talents. Rightly, we've been coached to be individuals, to be unique. This takes time, originality isn't xeroxed overnight and delivered midday tomorrow.

Deconstruct, reconstruct and reinvent, that's the very foundation of creative education. We're not natural employees, us creative types. There's something very independent about being creative, a solace even. We evolve to find the confidence to be ourselves – authentic voices ready to shout and scream from a unique perspective. Yet, right when we're ready to go it alone, we are required to collaborate by commercial realities. Designers are commercial artists after all.

Once again, the challenge renews. We leave education, and the first thing we learn out in the big wild world is to conform. Fuck that! We have to work with other people to achieve our aims. It's not easy – finding collaborators who hear our voice, speak our language and share our passion can be tough. The gears mesh, it grates. The search can go on and on, from choosing a university course to deciding on a project, a classmate to work with, a job to work on, an agency to work in and a client to work for. ■

*A creative person's quest for satisfaction never, ever stops. On we go, relentless in the pursuit of perfection*

■ Suddenly, right when we were least looking, we find a like-mind, or perhaps two. Someone as mad as we are, who overlaps and is different all at once. Suddenly  $1 + 1 = 3$ . It's a joy. Our voice has grown. Finally we can be ourselves, only better. Is this success? Hell no. We're just starting out.

At first, we earn trust, not money. We complete projects, we amass experience. We become sought after, respected, even valued. Our opinion is sought and paid for. We go to expensive, black-tie award dinners to get the accreditation we crave from our peers. Our work gets put up on the fridge again. Often, it's a commercial, profit-making kind of fridge this time. We pay to win. We convince ourselves that this is 'good business', that we're 'putting something back.' That we're building our profile, attracting better talent, clients and projects. Of course we are. Everyone does it, right? No! All we're really doing is helping the guy who owns the fridge to get rich.

Is this success? For a while it certainly feels like it, yes. People congratulate you at first, and then, after a while – especially if you keep winning stuff – they stop. But in the end, we're still looking for something better, so we keep going.

Is it fun? Hell yeah! Everything we ever wanted is now ours, almost. We're doing great work. We're earning trust, building a reputation. We took a risk, backed ourselves and went out on our own. Perhaps we did it with like-minds. Our company is growing, we're paid well, we've won awards. People know who we are, what we've done; they rate us, we're inside the circle, we're in. So is that success? Of course not. Well... it's a small measure of success. A few centimetres on the yardstick of progress. All that really happened is we joined a society within which are others who are looking for something more meaningful, just like us.

Sadly, inside the circle, there are only people like us. Hunters and gatherers, feeding off one another. Incestuous and cannibalistic. Sharing their victories, pushing their profiles and fighting for scraps. We have to get outside this circle to thrive. Imagine how weak our genome would be if we had never left the cave, that's creativity at its worst, right there.

Once we've achieved this 'success', we need to find the courage to go alone, all over again. To look at success objectively, and to see it for what it truly is, we have to get out of that inner circle. In fact, we have to work even harder as an outsider to get into the inner circles of others, that's where next.

That's where we'll meet incredible people. We'll see the same fire burning in their eyes. They have dreams too, but from a different perspective. We want to work with them and they want to work with us. What's our dream project? Let's go get it. Anything is possible. Outside the circle, it's  $1 + 1 = 3$  all over again. We'll find a fresh set of collaborators,

we'll learn something new, we'll work with the best to do the best work. It's that simple.

Let's be honest, as creative people, we suffer from something of a disorder. We hate to do the same thing twice. We're all about bigger, better, next. We want to do things that have never been done before. We want to be first.

Success is so relative. There will always be someone more successful than us inside that circle. Someone who has something we don't, that we want. Even if there isn't, it's good to believe there is, because it keeps us honest and stops pop from eating itself.

The ultimate fulfilment doesn't lie inside these tiny circles of success, but in something so much bigger: putting back, helping others to learn, setting them a bar to raise, inspiring them to do better work than we did. Sharing. Wise people say that if we want to be remembered, we have to write a book.

Well, how funny! Now we have. But that's not a measurement of success in itself. We can pay to publish a book, just like we can pay to win an award.

Becoming an educator, inspiring someone else to go further, to do better, that's success. It's a success so great that those we inspired will inevitably surpass our own achievements. They'll stand on our shoulders, tread on them, even, to reach even higher than we did. So is that success? Yep. That's what success is to us, and that's what our book is for.

Did our work on the fridge help our brothers and sisters to do better drawings? No. But that's the theory. Sorry brothers and sisters, we guess you've either got it or you haven't. Will this book help other designers do better work? We hope so. Legacy – that's the only kind of success we're interested in. It's a constantly evolving ambition. Just like the monkeys on the cover of our book, we aren't finished yet. ■

*Do you agree with GBH's definition of success? Tweet your thoughts to @ComputerArts using #DesignMatters*

*We hate to do the same thing twice, we're all about bigger, better, next. We want to do things that haven't been done*

#### WIN A COPY OF CHARM, BELLIGERENCE & PERVERSITY

*This extract was taken from GBH's new book, Charm, Belligerence & Perversity – which showcases the work and opinions of the creative agency, organised not chronologically but by psychological state. To be in with a chance of winning one of five copies, go to: [www.bit.ly/ca-gbhbook](http://www.bit.ly/ca-gbhbook)*



## DISCUSSION

# What's the best piece of constructive criticism you've ever been given on your portfolio?

PHOTOGRAPHY: Iona Wolff



**ANTHONY BURRILL**  
Freelance graphic artist  
[www.anthonyburrill.com](http://www.anthonyburrill.com)



**LAURA PRIM**  
Graphic designer and typographer  
[www.lauraprim.ch](http://www.lauraprim.ch)



**GREIG ANDERSON**  
Creative director, Freytag Anderson  
[www.freytaganderson.com](http://www.freytaganderson.com)

“I spent far too long working on my portfolio after I graduated. In truth, I was putting off the inevitable day when I had to show it to someone in order to get a job. It was only when I started to go and see people with it that I realised the actual portfolio wasn't that important. Graduate work always looks like graduate work, it's only when you start building up real commercial projects that your skills can be judged properly. It's important to have a decent portfolio, but it's not an end in itself. It's a calling card that gives an impression of who you are, and the work you show should reflect your personality.”

“A couple of years ago, I designed an exhibition poster for a Swiss museum, called Tina Modotti: Emigrant, Photographer, Revolutionary. The poster was representative of Tina Modotti's personality and her work. However, because of the naked female body, the local authorities decided that it wasn't to be displayed in public. Then the press got wind of the issue, the decision to ban it was met with incomprehension by the public and the exhibition turned out to be a great success. This was the most public piece of criticism I've ever received. It strengthened my resolution not to let my work be influenced by values I don't share.”

“At a first interview after graduation, I was given some solid advice regarding my rather large A2 folio. The first was to chuck most of it away. In my inexperience, I had tried to pad it out with just about every project I had ever undertaken; they basically suggested that I keep four or five key projects that showed my best work and ditch the rest. There aren't many people lugging portfolio cases around these days, but a succinct, ruthless edit of your portfolio PDF is a must. Keep it clean, lean and show the best of what you can do. If you are lacking some work in a particular area, then identify a problem and create a brief yourself.”

## TWEET @COMPUTERARTS OR FIND US ON FACEBOOK



**@CHRISKOENS**

Edit. My collection of work was getting too large – I was reminded to edit down to just the best pieces.



**@COLIN\_MOVECRAFT**

Build your portfolio for the job you want, not the ones you've had.



**@KSQUAREG**

Imagine your sample portfolio work to be the live work, and then look at it from the client's perspective.



**DANIEL SANTOS**

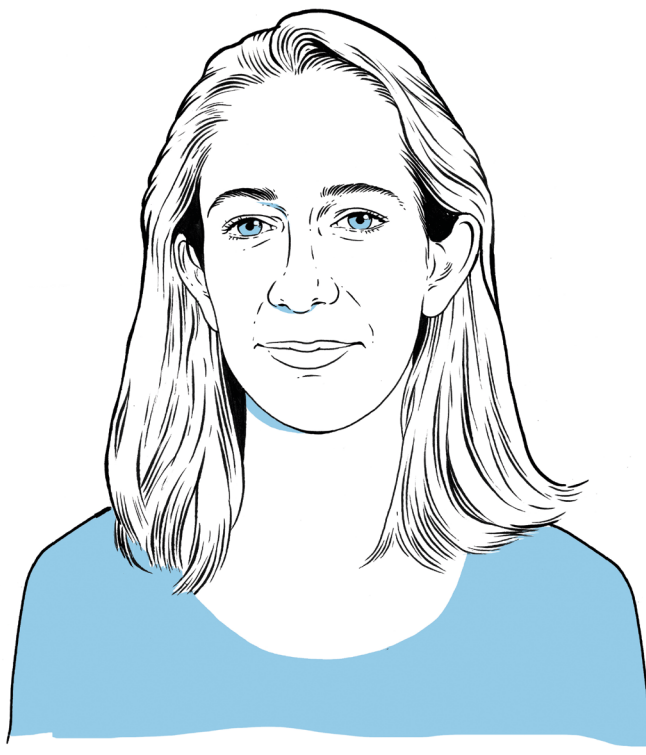
Don't put your best, or favourite, works in your portfolio just to show off your skills. The stories about your work are what really matters.



**KAIQUE AMORIM**

I gave myself the following advice: Stop changing the layout, and don't even try to code – there's no way back. Since you know little about coding, you'll be redesigning forever.

## COLUMN



# Licence to draw

Managing director of the AOI,  
**Ren Renwick**, reveals why copyright  
and licensing have never been so  
important for illustrators

**C**opyright and licensing are hardly words to lift the spirits and inspire creative energy, yet they are essential. The UK has brilliant copyright law, closely aligned to the also excellent European law. These laws look even better compared to the US where, although copyright exists, you have to pay to register it to get the full protection. In the UK, that protection is a given: all your illustration work automatically has full copyright.

But there is significant growth in copyright infringement cases. The notable industry case studies – often involving high-street brands – can be read as shorthand for a myriad of cases that fail to attract coverage. Why is this happening? In part, it is because illustrators are increasingly confident in understanding and knowing their rights, and speaking out when they are abused. The Association of Illustrators (AOI) – the UK body supporting illustrators and the illustration industry – regularly advises on concerns around copyright infringements, and has excellent fact sheets for understanding these seemingly complex areas.

And of course, there's the good news: that there is ever-growing consumer demand for great illustration on everything from print to pinafors to pixels. I may be biased, but I would say that illustration is the strongest visual communication tool in our increasingly image-based world. Its versatility and accessibility are integral to everything from literature and apps, to packaging and advertising. Illustration is in our supermarkets, on our mobiles, in our libraries and on our clothes.

A world without illustration is unthinkable, and it's copyright that supports it all.

Without copyright you cannot licence. Without licensing we wouldn't have an industry where illustration can be a viable career, and without career illustrators, commissioners wouldn't be able

to get the great work that they need. While some would argue that globalisation and the internet make copyright redundant, the truth is it's never been so vital. Not only is it perfectly able to adapt to all that the current and future commissioning landscapes require, it works brilliantly as an economic model. Licensing allows for commissioners to pay for the specific uses they need at the time, and then come back later if they require more. It's a lean and efficient purchasing model.

The knack is for illustrators and commissioners to work together to understand how this works, and to be open with each other to ensure we keep our thriving and enviable illustration industry going. Commissioners rely on there being great illustrators of all kinds – emerging, established, experimental, esoteric – just as illustrators rely on a broad breadth of commissions.

The AOI, and I, look forward to working respectfully, energetically and positively together with commissioners and illustrators – as an industry – to ensure the future for ourselves and our wonderful, inspirational world of illustration. ■

*The AOI can provide expert guidance on business matters for illustrators, including licensing and copyright. Find out more at [www.theaoi.com](http://www.theaoi.com)*

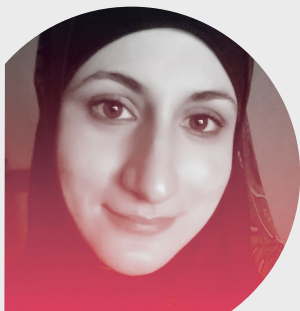


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## Focus on: Brand New rebrand

UnderConsideration's branding critique platform has a new look. We turn the tables with three perspectives on the branding expert's own identity...



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Founder, Brand New  
[www.underconsideration.com/brandnew](http://www.underconsideration.com/brandnew)



**GAUTE TENOLD AASE**  
Creative director, Anti  
[www.anti.as](http://www.anti.as)

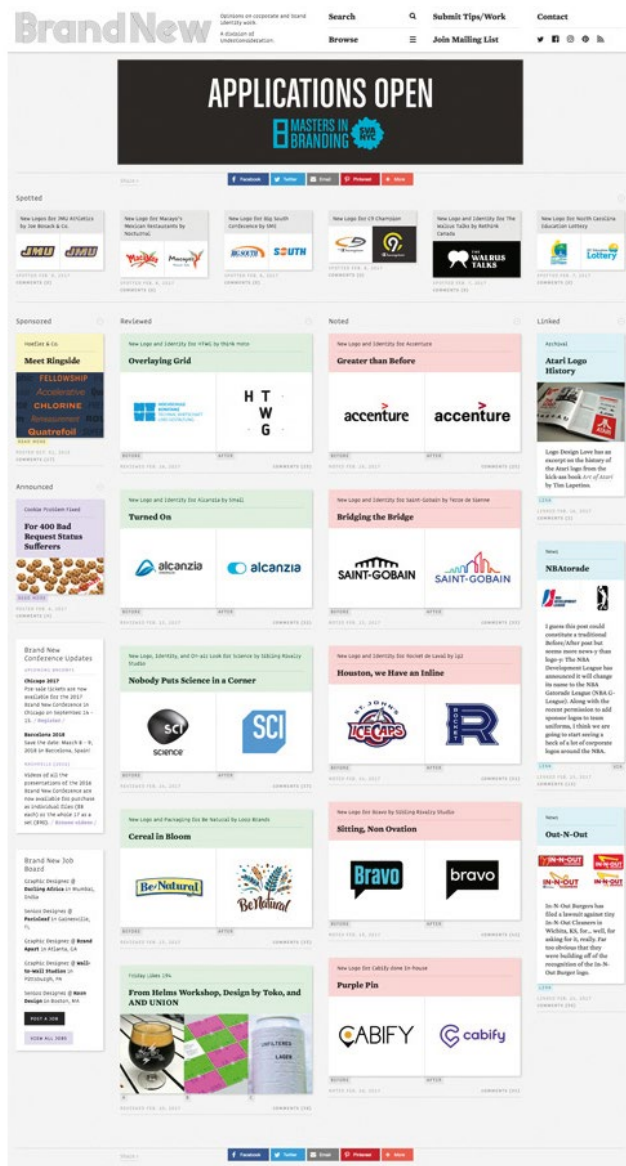
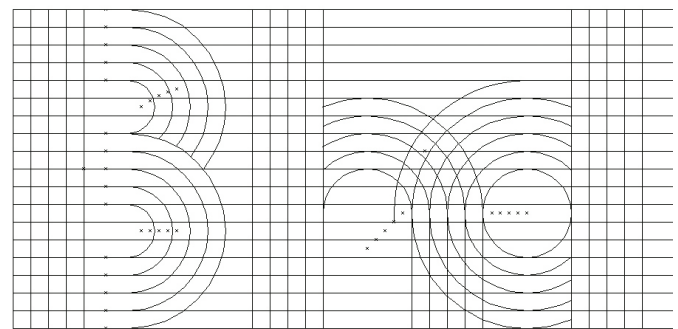
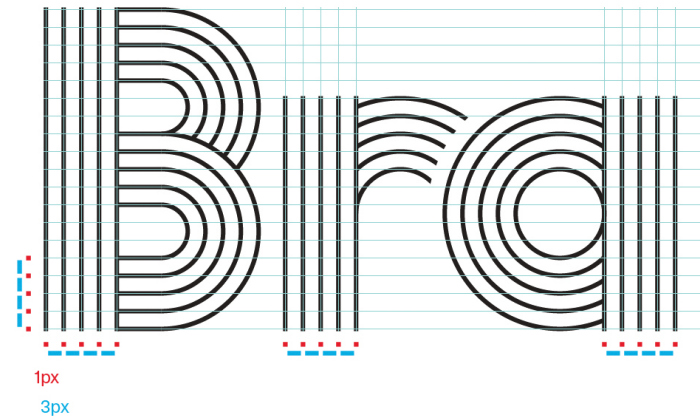


**MIKE HERRERA**  
Art director, Anagrama  
[www.anagrama.com](http://www.anagrama.com)

"After 10 years of having the same logo, we felt it was time to change – in part to mark that this most recent site redesign was the biggest shift yet. We completely changed the visual vocabulary from anything we had previously done, so the logo followed suit. My appreciation of 1970s typography is no secret, and I had no problem in adopting something that references that era quite directly. The 1968 Summer Olympics identity is one of my favourites too, so the new logo makes some references to that. Mostly, this satisfies a visual direction I craved and means nothing more or less than the old logo, which I also chose because I liked the font at the time. Brand New may feel like a big online publication – and to a degree it is – but it's still run by a punk kid from Mexico, who every now and then does weird things because he can."

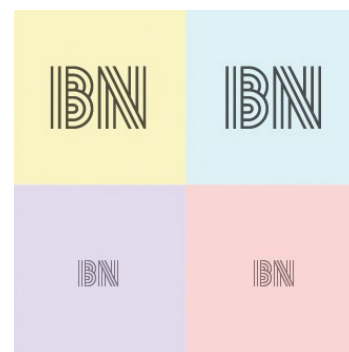
"Brand New is one of those blogs every graphic designer visits. I have to admit though, I've never considered the design of the site itself. The new makeover feels refreshing. The layout of the front page is a bit cluttered, but the article layout is a huge improvement, and the new sections and features are great. I like the colour palette, but it's been given a bit too much space on the front page. I have to say I prefer the old logo. This new one has a bit of a retro vibe to it. The monogram is quite nice though. All in all, a decent rebrand."

"As Brand New is about logo reviews, the new redesign might be too loud for its own sake, I believe a more neutral or transparent approach would seem more fitting. The new colour palette is nice and it is understandable for the sections to be colour-coded, but a more low-key execution would have been more appropriate, so as not to distract from the content itself. The logotype is a bit hard to read at times, and might come across as too drastic of a change. As Armin himself has mentioned, it's hard to design a logo about logo reviews, but we can certainly acknowledge the hard work and thought process that went into this project."



Above: The logo, seen here on the grid, is based on Lineto's Prismaset Five.

Far left: Home page for the redesigned Brand New website.



Left and above: Monogram and standard versions of the logo in different colours. Armin Vit wanted a softer look for the site, and so chose pastel colours that support the dark grey on top.







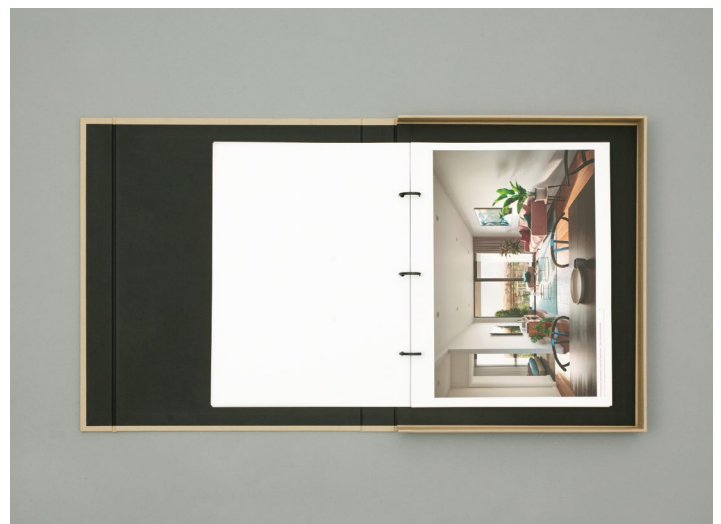
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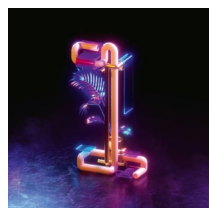
Richards Partners created a custom typeface, Fabric Display, and paired it with Colophon's sans serif, Basis Grotesque.

Lettering from Fabric Display is used to break up different sections of the brochure, which advertises the new residential development.

Logotype for Fabric Display – on the brochure cover – references the site's heritage as a clothing factory, using hyphens to represent thread.

The brochure's uncoated dyed papers, fabric cover and blind deboss reflect the architecture and history of the Fabric development.

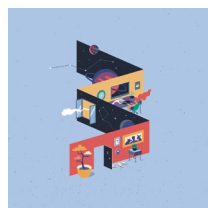
A robust folder houses the brochure, giving the identity project a sophisticated tactility.



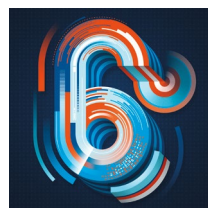
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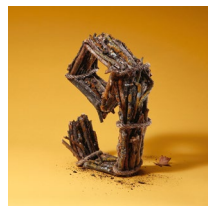
@maiodemeyer



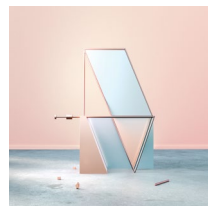
@dierra



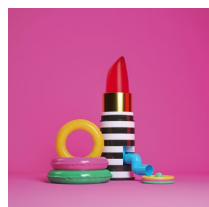
@miltacarlton



@serisicui



@pleid.sl



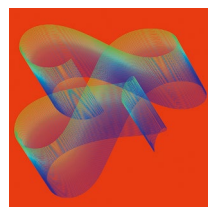
@darias88



@muokkaa



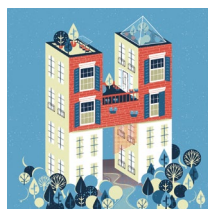
@pedroyarbid



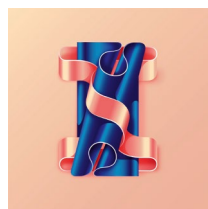
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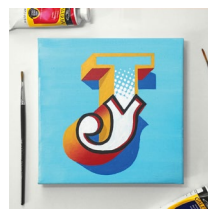
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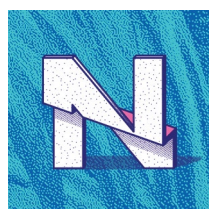
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@lukerichie



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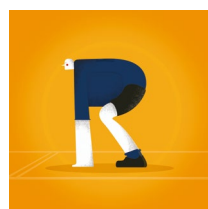
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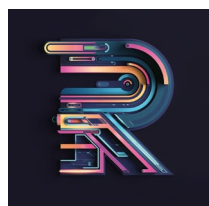
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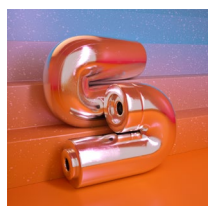
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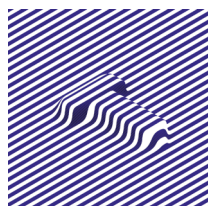
@marin\_sca



@rikootenbrook



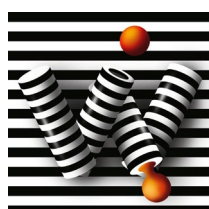
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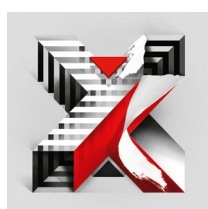
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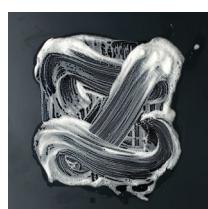
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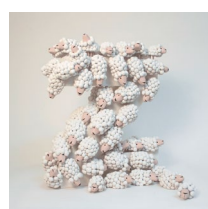
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@birgitpalma



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## ALPHABET EYE CANDY

### 36 DAYS OF TYPE

by Various artists

[www.instagram.com/36daysoftype](http://www.instagram.com/36daysoftype)

Barcelona-based graphic designers Nina Sans and Rafa Goicoechea launched daily art project 36 Days of Type as a way to challenge themselves to experiment with new type. Fast-forward a few years, and thousands of designers, illustrators and graphic artists now take part in the project, with a curated section of each day's best letters or numerals published on the project's Instagram account, which has over 100,000 followers.

"The amount of content tagged with #36daysoftype goes up to 209,000 images submitted so far," says Sans. "This project is as much about a community doing the same exercise together and getting to know other artists, as it is about exposure," she continues.

"It's hard to choose favourites," adds Goicoechea. "There are some great submissions from our guests – like Vault49, Will Gates, 27Lletres and recently Six N Five – and from participants that get involved spontaneously. Our next step is to do an exhibition here in Barcelona. It's going to be very soon."





## DIGGING IT

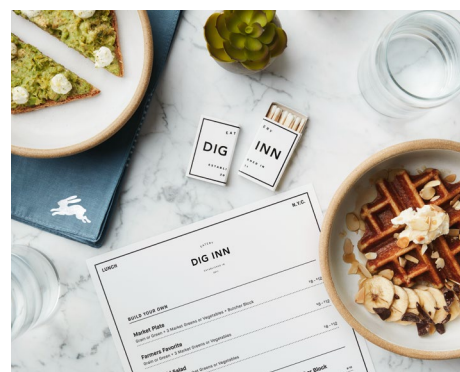
### DIG INN IDENTITY

by High Tide

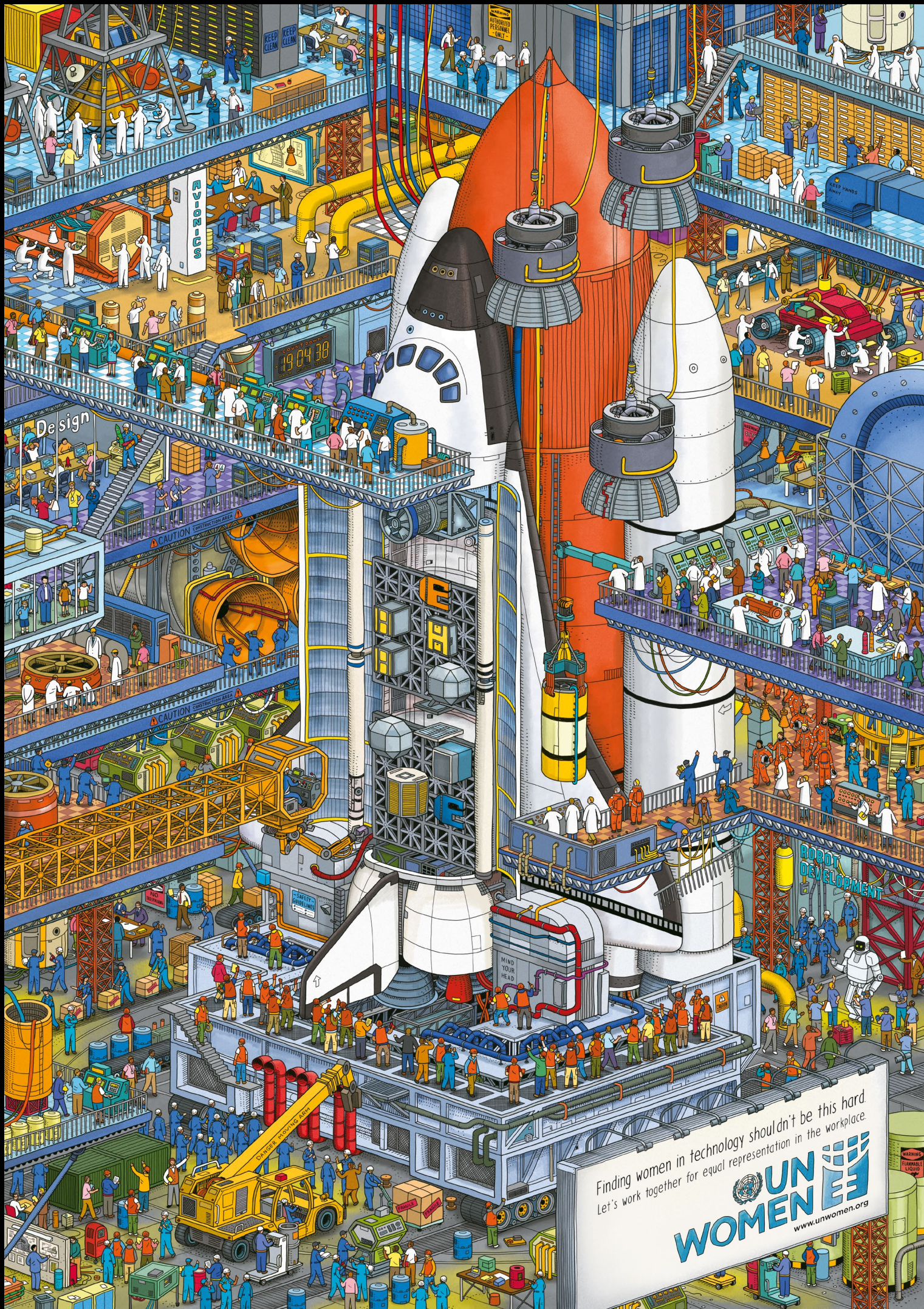
[www.hightidenyc.com](http://www.hightidenyc.com)

Briefed to develop a cohesive identity that would reflect fast-food chain Dig Inn's newly defined values as it prepared for a national expansion, New York-based studio High Tide took a textured, minimal approach to the design. "The branding had to be 'approachably sophisticated', light and clean, communal and comfortable, and indicative of food and cooking," explains creative director Danny Miller.

Inspired by the way in which Scandinavian interiors are "decidedly minimal," yet never sterile or cold, the Dig Inn branding evolved as High Tide began adding dimension with an icon suite and robust color palette reflective of the changing seasons. "Maintaining consistency across all brand touchpoints involved a healthy degree of restraint," explains Miller, "but we loved working on the endless range of collateral."







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## WHERE'S THE WOMAN?

### UN WOMEN EGYPT CAMPAIGN

by DDB Dubai and IC4Design

[www.ic4design.com](http://www.ic4design.com)

Ad agency DDB Dubai collaborated with Japanese illustration duo IC4Design to create a three-part series of illustrations highlighting the gender divide at work in Egypt. Produced for UN Women Egypt, the three print ads show meticulously detailed environments across three up-and-coming Egyptian industries – technology, politics and science – with each ad displaying the campaign's message that it shouldn't be this hard to find women in each workplace.

"By challenging the reader to actually spend time looking for the women, we wanted to prove our point," explains Firas Medrows, executive creative director, DDB Dubai. "We needed to find someone who could really bring to life these elaborate ads in a beautiful, yet lighthearted way. And we found the perfect match with IC4Design from Japan."

## HAND-DRAWN CONNECTIONS

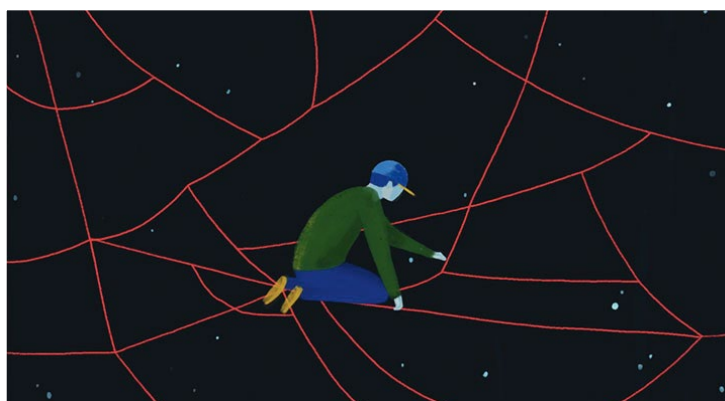
### THE BOY WHO FELL AND THE MAN WHO PICKED HIM UP AGAIN

by Hanne Berkaak

[www.hanne-berkaak.squarespace.com](http://www.hanne-berkaak.squarespace.com)

Oslo-based illustrator and animator Hanne Berkaak recently brought her warm, tactile illustration style to a sensitive short film about self-harm for RVTS Sør, a psychological trauma resource centre in Norway. "The client wanted a film that would help teachers, psychologists, doctors and other professionals who meet young people in crisis to understand that if you really want to help, you must be willing to take a risk," explains Berkaak.

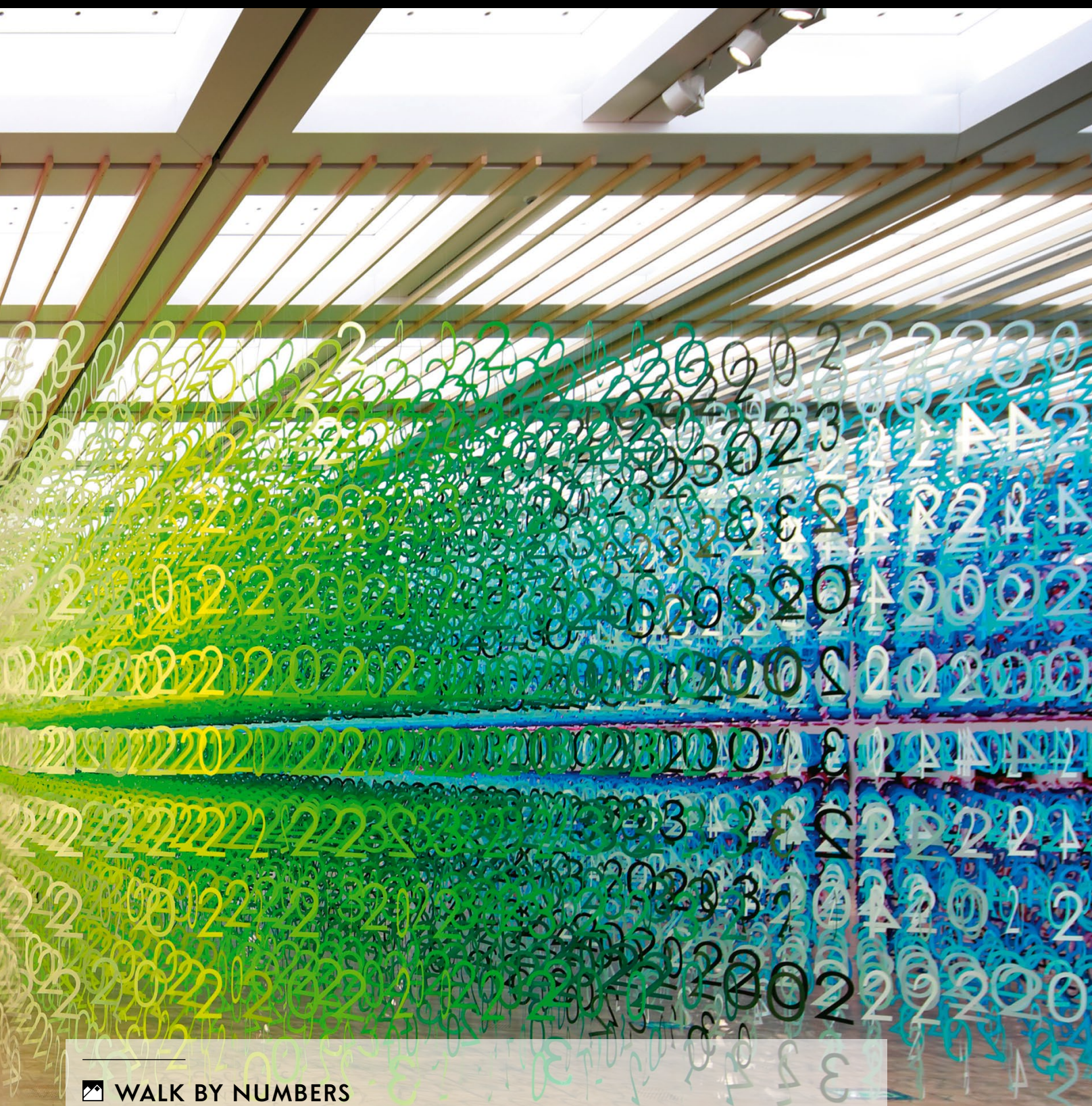
"I felt that a hand-drawn style, with a thick, textured brush, would help make the drawings feel less 'perfect' and suit the sensitive nature of the narrative. I used muted colours, so the red line [a spiderweb, representing cut marks] would stand out," she says.











## WALK BY NUMBERS

### FOREST OF NUMBERS

by Emmanuelle Moureaux

[www.emmanuellemoureaux.com](http://www.emmanuellemoureaux.com)

French architect and designer Emmanuelle Moureaux celebrated the 10th anniversary of the National Art Center of Tokyo by transforming its 2,000-square metre exhibition space into a kaleidoscopic paper-cut forest of numbers. The installation visualises the next decade, from 2017 to 2026, by aligning more than 60,000 suspended numerals (ranging from 0 to 9) in three-dimensional grids, with each of the 10 layers representing one year.

Once installed, a pathway was cut through the installation so that visitors could explore the artwork, which contains 100 different colours. Without the normal divides of the gallery, the exhibition had a certain stillness about it, and attracted over 20,000 visitors in 10 days. "The tunnel is my favourite part," says Moureaux. "Walking through a multi-coloured forest of numbers, surrounded by infinite combinations, was both a strange and amazing feeling."





## CHANGING DIRECTION

### TYSON LOGO

by Brand Union

[www.brandunion.com](http://www.brandunion.com)

Manufactured food company Tyson Foods debuted its new logo at the end of February. Designed by Brand Union, the new logo swaps its previous bright yellow and orange brand colours for a more corporate deep blue, while the monogram uses the recognisable arrow of a weathervane to represent 'F' for Foods.

"The weathervane is a farmer's compass. It signals direction," explains design director Stephanie Landry. "Tyson Foods needed to represent legacy and advancement. The identity had to be rooted in their history as an agricultural pioneer, while setting the stage for their future as a modern food company. Our monogram speaks to both the direction of the company – focused on the future, raising expectations – and its strong family roots," she continues.





## HEROES

### DAVID BOWIE SPECIAL STAMPS

by Royal Mail

[www.royalmail.com/davidbowiestamps](http://www.royalmail.com/davidbowiestamps)

The latest instalment in Royal Mail's Music Giants Special Stamps series pays tribute to David Bowie. Released on 14 March, six stamps feature iconic album covers, and an additional four show Bowie playing live.

Based on a template created by Studio Dempsey for Royal Mail's 2010 Classic Album Art Stamps, the stamps were designed in-house by Royal Mail. "We wanted to convey the musical and cultural genius of Bowie," says Dean Price, design manager at Royal Mail. "They're die cut and feature the arc of the vinyl record emerging from the sleeve. Blackstar required the most work, but turned out really well in the end."



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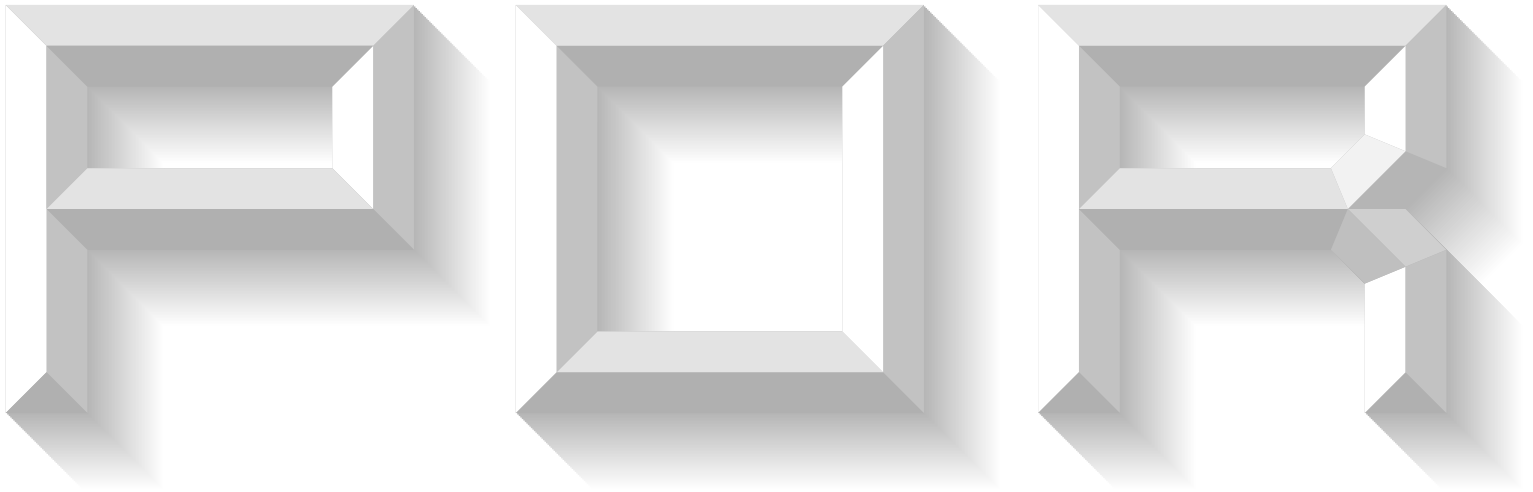
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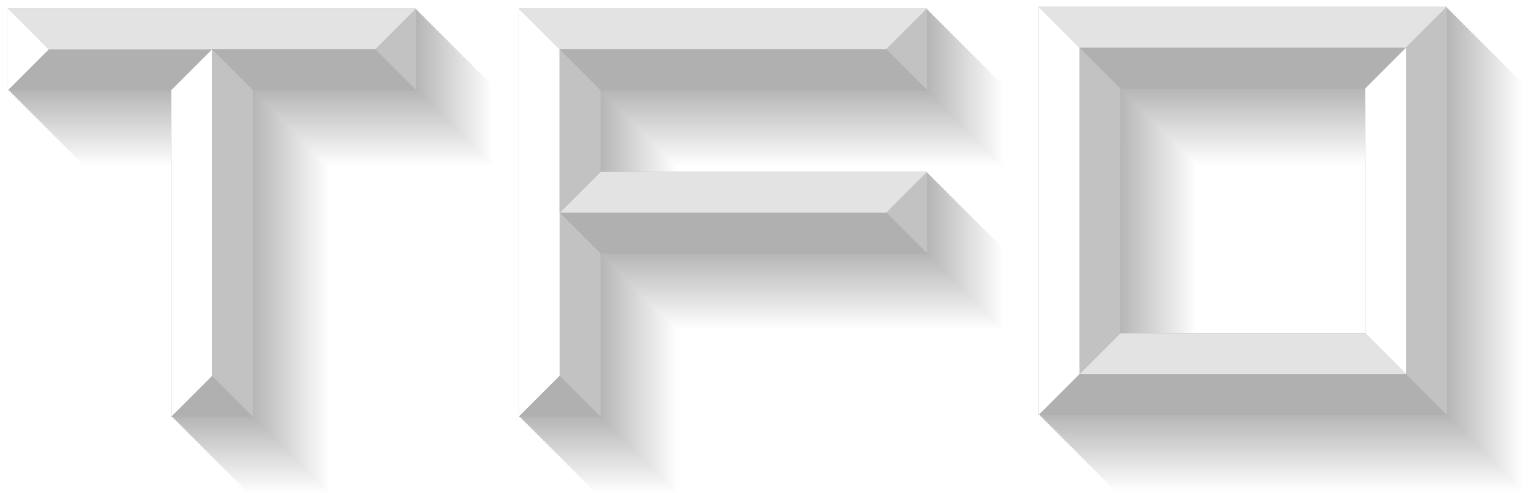
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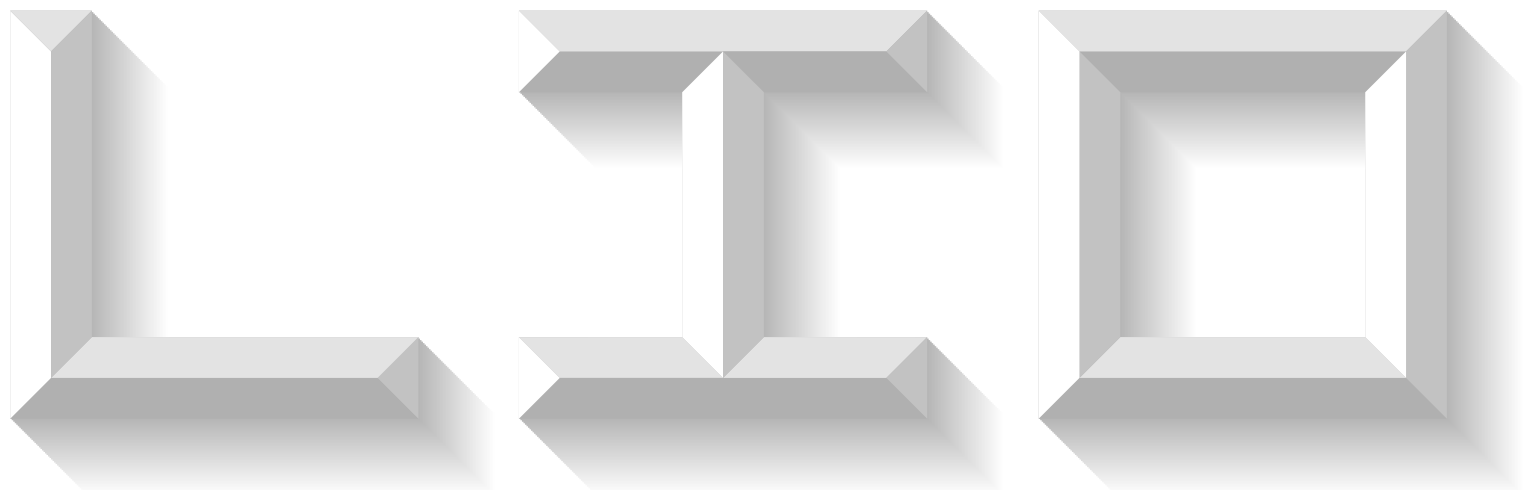




**Tom May** speaks to recruiters at top design agencies to learn what they're



looking for in a killer portfolio, and how to make yours stand out







## “IMAGINE THAT THE PERSON LOOKING AT YOUR PORTFOLIO IS GOING TO SPEND 30 SECONDS ON IT. IT’S GOT TO BE VISUAL”

OLLY ST JOHN, DESIGNER, NB STUDIO

**P**ortfolios are for life, not just for internships. Throughout your career, a portfolio is a vital tool in winning better jobs and new freelance contracts. But talented creatives often fail to capitalise on these opportunities by neglecting to raise their portfolio to the right level. Whether you’re a student looking for your first gig, a middleweight wishing to advance, or a senior hunting for your dream position, your portfolio could probably do with some attention.

At its most fundamental, design is about empathy. So the essence of getting your portfolio right lies in understanding your audience – in this case, the designers, agency heads and recruitment specialists who’ll be looking at it. And there’s one thing you need to appreciate about all of these people – they have very little time.

Take Olly St John, a designer at boutique agency NB Studio: “Because we’re quite a small team, I tend to deal with looking at interns’ and freelancers’ portfolios,” he explains. “But we get tons of them. With such an intense amount to look at, that dictates how much time I can spend looking at them. I tend to skim, if I’m completely honest. I’m an occasional guest lecturer, so I always tell my students: ‘Imagine that the person looking at it is going to spend 30 seconds on it. It’s got to be visual.’”

St John tells a tale that echoes throughout the industry. However great your portfolio is, don’t expect it to be read cover to cover; expect little more than a glance or a quick scan. So how do you make the most of that brief opportunity?

We’re going to assume you’re already familiar with the basics of creating a good portfolio (if not, see our Creative Bloq post at [www.bit.ly/265portfolio](http://www.bit.ly/265portfolio)). Across the following pages, you’ll find extra tips and updated advice from hirers at top agencies, for every stage of your career.

### THE FIRST STEP

If you’re trying to get your first job or internship, here’s some good

news: your portfolio doesn’t have to be perfect, and agencies are more than aware that you probably won’t have a lot of experience.

“With junior designers, we’re looking at potential,” says Tim Smith, principal of design at digital agency ustwo. “A real raw spark of something exciting. The rest you can refine. There are a lot of skills you can learn, but there are some that are really difficult to teach.”

That doesn’t mean that you shouldn’t make your portfolio as good as you can, of course. But it does mean you shouldn’t pretend to be something you’re not.

“For me, it’s very frustrating when I don’t know if certain projects are ‘real’ or not,” says Sean Murphy, creative director at Moving Brands. “So flagging up whether something is actual freelance work that’s out in the world, or a personal or student project, is very important.”

There’s nothing wrong with showing personal work per se, says Tony Brook, creative director at Spin. “People often do show personal work, and that can be quite useful to see. Especially if it indicates what their interests are, or what they’re passionate about.” Nor is there anything wrong with including group projects. “Again, ▶

## FEATURED CREATIVES



### SEAN REES

Sean is creative director at Moving Brands, an independent, global creative company that has offices in London, Zürich, San Francisco and New York. [www.movingbrands.com](http://www.movingbrands.com)



### TONY BROOK

Tony is creative director and founding partner at London-based Spin, a design studio that delivers clear, elegant design solutions across multiple platforms. [www.spin.co.uk](http://www.spin.co.uk)



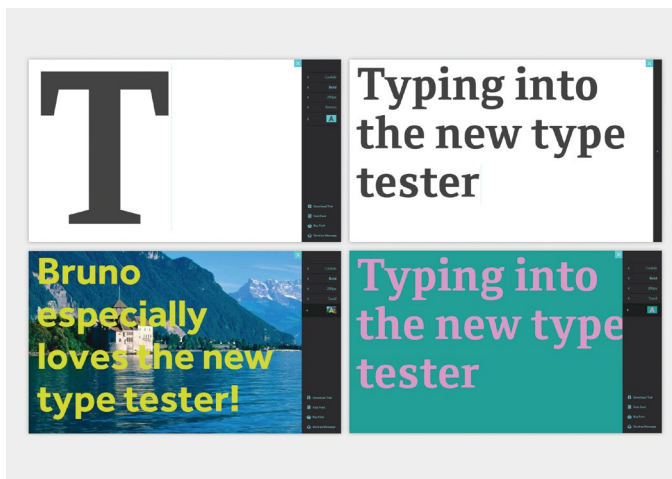
### OLLY ST JOHN

Olly is a graphic designer at branding and comms studio NB Studio, where he has worked for three years, following internships at Pearlfisher and The Chase. [www.nbstudio.co.uk](http://www.nbstudio.co.uk)



### TIM SMITH

Tim is principal of design at digital product studio ustwo. He leads the Auto team, exploring user experience in the in-car, connected car and mobility space. [www.ustwo.com](http://www.ustwo.com)



## WHY ONE ISN'T ENOUGH

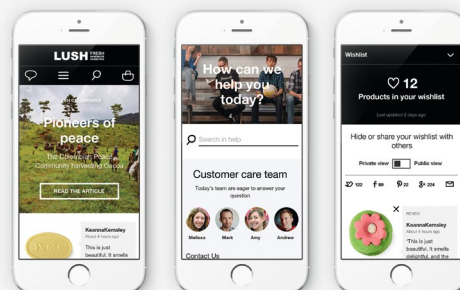
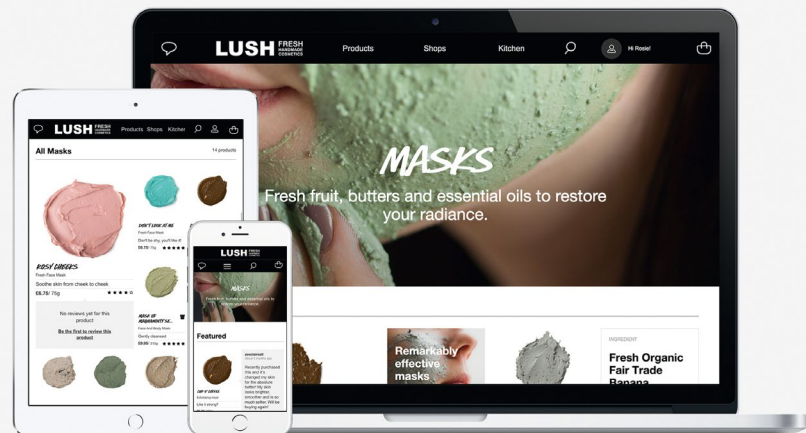
USTWO'S ROSIE FERRIS ARGUES WHY MULTIPLE PORTFOLIOS CAN HELP YOU TAILOR YOUR WORK

Senior product designer at ustwo, Rosie Ferris, has noticed that as her career has developed, the way she's tackled her portfolio has changed too. "Most recently I've started adding more 'meta' content around my projects," she explains. "That means not just showing the final work itself, but telling the story of the project process, sharing the original brief, and making sure I explain what my role was and how I made decisions."

Ferris has always had multiple versions of her portfolio, which enables her to tailor her work to different audiences. "For one job, you're likely to have multiple interviews and it's important to show the right kind of work to the right people," she says. "In some cases they might request something specific, like a deep dive on a particular project, so it's good to keep notes on your process and the journey of the project, even if you don't put all of it in every version of your portfolio."

That multiplicity of approaches even applies within a single interview, she adds. "Sometimes interviewers will ask to see projects you might not have expected them to be interested in. I've found it useful to start by summarising the portfolio I've prepared, and if there are any projects they're particularly interested in, I can prioritise the order of the presentation."

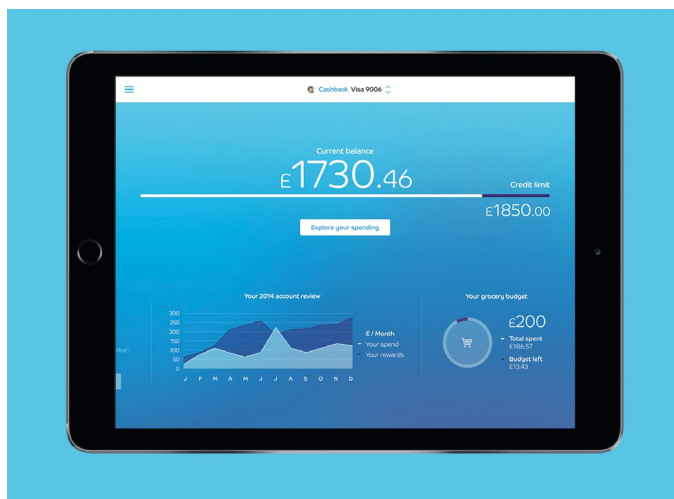
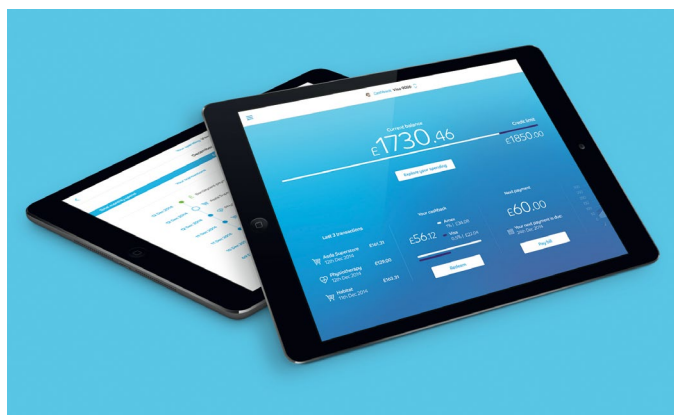
"Also, if there's time at the end of a portfolio presentation to share more work, I make sure to have a long PDF with my full portfolio, so I can show more of a type of work if needed."



**Top left:** ustwo worked with type foundry Dalton Maag to redesign its site, and develop a new format to purchase and license fonts.

**Left and above:** For Lush Cosmetics, ustwo created a responsive retail experience and a new service, Lush Kitchen, which handmakes fresh cosmetics daily.





## EVOLUTION OF A PORTFOLIO

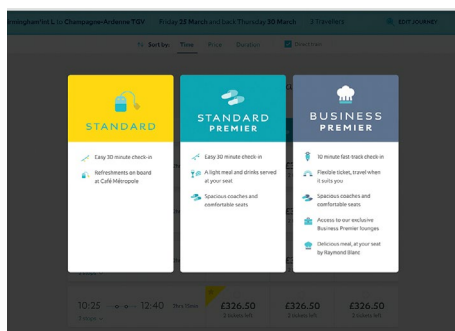
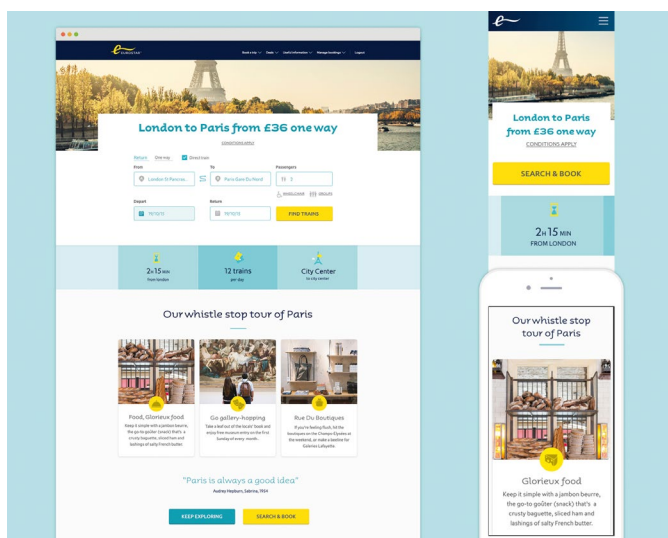
ROSIE FERRIS' COLLEAGUE ANJOLI DEY HAS A FOLIO THAT'S EVOLVED WITH HER, FROM STUDENT TO SENIOR

"My first portfolio was a massive A1 folder I put together at school to apply for an Art Foundation course," recalls Anjali Dey, lead product designer at ustwo. "Once I graduated from university in 2006, it had shrunk down to an A3 box, with prints, objects and artefacts. The tutors told us this was the best way at the time to present and preserve work."

When she moved to London in search of a job, Dey felt it was time to make an online portfolio. "I made it using Dreamweaver," she recalls. "I had no clue what I was doing, but I muddled through and hacked it together somehow."

When she began working in agencies, she found herself working for a range of similar clients, and this meant that her portfolio lacked variety. "I didn't want to be pigeonholed, though, so I would take on personal or freelance projects to show off my other skills and interests," she explains. "In the last few years, my role has changed and I'm now wearing many hats, including research, user experience and design, so that has to be reflected in my portfolio too," she continues.

"I find updating the portfolio the most difficult job a designer has to undertake," she admits. "Which is why mine is currently 'under maintenance'! You have to discipline yourself and treat it like a client project. And then there's the dreaded NDA. So much of the work I've created over the last few years is under lock and key or not yet released, which is so frustrating."



**Top left:** Concepts exploring the future of financial services, for an app focusing on the data visualisation of spending habits.

**Left and above:** ustwo's concepts for the booking journey and destination pages on Eurostar's new responsive website.

## “PERSONAL WORK CAN BE USEFUL IF IT SHOWS WHAT YOUR INTERESTS ARE, OR WHAT YOU’RE PASSIONATE ABOUT”

TONY BROOK, CREATIVE DIRECTOR, SPIN

■ that doesn’t particularly worry me; quite often things are a group effort,” Brook reasons.

However, do make sure you don’t pass off the work of others as your own, either consciously or subconsciously. “Remember, you often get people applying from the same university, who’ve worked on things together,” says St John. “So if I don’t know it’s group work, and then I see the same project in someone else’s portfolio...”

One recent trend is for students to feature ‘personal branding’ for themselves, such as their own logo, in their portfolio. But be warned: hirers aren’t keen on this trend, and in all honesty, would rather just see your name nicely typeset. “Personal branding gets in the way of what you’re trying to look at, which is the work,” says Murphy. “It opens candidates up to criticism too: if they create a personal brand, they have to expect that brand to be critiqued in some way.”

Tim Beard, partner at Bibliothèque concurs. “The portfolio itself is the ‘branding,’” he

argues. “It doesn’t really need a logo. Good control of ideas, type and articulation of content is a much better use of your time.”

In short, trying too hard to stand out from the competition can often be counterproductive. “Interns tend to be take more ‘creative’ approaches when they send us their folio,” reflects Madeleine Fortescue, resource and recruitment manager at Moving Brands. “But I think this often just takes away from the work.”

For example, one candidate sent a recording of him singing his CV; another sent instructions on how to create an origami bird; a third sent the team a box of crisps. “At some places, maybe gimmicks like that go down well,” muses Fortescue. “But for us, it’s all about the work, so I think that focusing on producing a curated, solid and confident portfolio is a much better approach.”

But what if that solid portfolio isn’t getting you anywhere? How do you find out what’s wrong? Simple, says St John: just ask. NB Studio, he

says, sends a simple ‘capsule reply’ to every portfolio submission, acknowledging receipt – but if you don’t hear anything for a while, there’s no harm in directly asking for feedback. “I’m never harsh, but I’m usually quite honest,” he smiles.

### IN THE MIDDLE

So you’ve got your feet under the table in your first job. It’s all going well, meaning that you can forget about your portfolio for a while, right? Wrong. Even if you’ve got no immediate plans to look for another job, you never know when you might need to. Redundancies often come like a bolt from the ■

## LET’S GET PHYSICAL

### ARE PHYSICAL PORTFOLIOS STILL RELEVANT IN 2017?

**The days when hirers demanded to see a physical, printed portfolio seem to be waning. “I haven’t seen a physical portfolio in about 10 years,” says ustwo’s Tim Smith. “Back in the day, if I saw someone with a leather portfolio, I’d think: ‘Ah! There’s a fellow graphic designer.’ If I see it now, which is very rare, I think: ‘Photographer, or maybe architect, maybe a yoga instructor, definitely not a graphic designer.’”**

ustwo is a digital agency, but although Spin works on a range of physical and print projects, founding partner and creative director Tony Brook takes a similar view. “I recommend candidates send PDFs and/or URLs,” he says. “With a pin-sharp PDF, your work never looks better than it does on a shiny Apple Mac,

high-resolution screen. In comparison, physical portfolios just look grubby and a bit knackered. It’s a very studenty kind of look.”

Opinions on this matter are divided, though, and Tim Beard of Bibliothèque, for one, would like to see something tangible, at least when it comes to the interview stage. “It’s good to see physical things as well as digital files or PDFs,” he maintains. “You don’t need a print-out of every item in your portfolio, but it’s useful in the places where format, scale or extent change the perception in some way: books, magazines, posters, packaging, and so on. You need in some way to tell a bigger story than any previous interaction has offered. If you have experimented or pushed finishing and execution, this is the time to illustrate it.”





blue. And the principle of 'last in, first out' normally applies, so as a fresh hire you're unfortunately particularly vulnerable.

On a more positive note, perhaps the powers that be have noticed your great work and are thinking about promoting you. But be honest: if a superior suddenly asked you into their office and asked to see your latest portfolio, would it be ready for viewing? Would you be ready to show it?

In short, if you want to continue advancing, you're going to need to keep updating, refining and

improving your design portfolio throughout your career. The good news is that you don't necessarily have to do a radical redesign. Simply adding new work will often be enough to get you a long way.

"As a hirer, the thing you really notice with a more experienced designer's portfolio is how stuff's photographed," says St John. "That's often because most of it's been done at an agency level, where they've spent a few thousand on great photography. So it is usually quite easy to see the quality over the student-level work."

But there is another, greater challenge. Now you have more work to choose from, you need to put more effort into curating it. While at student level, curation just means choosing your best work, it's now time to think more seriously about what direction you want to go in future, and start gearing your selection towards that choice. Doing so will help hirers have a much better understanding of where your interests lie, and as a result, where you might best fit in an organisation. Not doing so, in turn, may convey a lack of purpose or direction.

"One of my biggest bugbears is when people include everything; try to cover all angles, all bases," says Fortescue. "A portfolio should demonstrate why you're a match for the role you're looking to fill. It needs to say: 'This is why I'm really the best person for this, look at the work I've done.' Rather than, 'Hey look, I do a bit of everything.'"

At this stage, recruiters aren't just looking for high-quality work from candidates, they're usually looking for something specific.

"What really gets me excited is fit and relevance," says Smith. "Not just in the kind of work that you've been doing but also in the way you carry yourself, the way you talk about yourself, the personality you portray. It's nice to see a portfolio from someone that seems to have very similar personality to us as a company. I can imagine other

agencies that are a bit more serious might be put off by the portfolios we get, and vice versa. Because it's important to fit into the company culture as well as the sort of work we do," he explains.

### MOVING ON UP

You've finally become a senior designer. With widespread respect for your work and good relationships in the industry, putting together a winning portfolio will be a doddle, surely?

Sadly, it's not always that simple. For a start, the more responsibility you take on within your studio, the more confidentiality agreements you have to sign, and the more difficult it can be to actually show what you've been working on.

In this case, at least, peers will empathise. "It's often the case that more experienced designers will be reluctant to email over confidential work, or have it on their website," says Smith. "So we're very aware of that." And depending on the client, there are various strategies you can take to circumvent restrictions, such as showing the work in the more confidential circumstances of an interview setting, or maybe restricting it to a password-protected area of your website.

Perhaps a trickier problem is that the more senior you become, the less hands-on and the more strategic and managerial your involvement in projects gets. And this can be difficult to convey in a portfolio. "With senior candidates, it can sometimes be difficult to tangibly distil what they were responsible for, what value they brought to the project," says Smith. "And so you find that more senior people's portfolios tend to be less visual as a result."

Rather than relying on large-scale images, then, you may now need to present your projects more like a blog or a case study, with concise but careful text explaining the brief, how it was met, and the specific part you played. Again, it's important to avoid overstating your

## "A CURATED, CLEAR, CONCISE, BOLD PORTFOLIO IS REALLY THE ONLY THING WE'RE LOOKING FOR"

MADELEINE FORTESCUE, RECRUITMENT MANAGER, MOVING BRANDS



## "IT'S NICE TO SEE A PORTFOLIO FROM SOMEONE THAT SEEMS TO HAVE VERY SIMILAR PERSONALITY TO US"

TIM SMITH, PRINCIPAL OF DESIGN, USTWO

role in projects, whether intentionally or accidentally.

"I once had someone come in for a senior design position here, and they presented my own work back to me as their own," Smith reveals. "They'd worked on the project, but they were actually just doing asset creation for the developer, and the graphic design was all my work from a year previously. So it was incredibly embarrassing. I had to say: 'I know you didn't do what you say you did, because I did that.' Needless to say, he didn't get any further."

On the positive side, once you're a senior designer you'll probably have enough experience and wisdom under your belt to consider experimenting with how your portfolio is presented. Smith recalls one particularly memorable example: "One senior sent me a video of each of his projects. The whole thing was just one minute long, and he spoke over them in a quite personal way; explaining what the final product was, the process they used to get there,

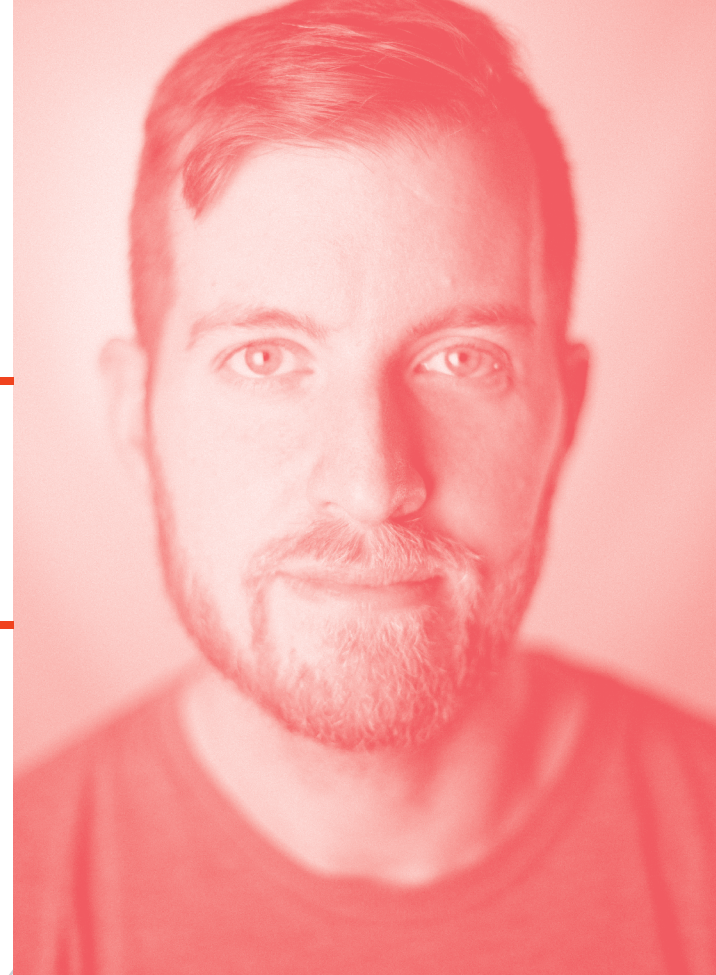
and what his own involvement had been. It was the perfect time saver because it was like five short clips of five different projects, very easy to digest." Needless to say, he got the job.

### KEEP IT CLEAN

It's clear that, whether you're just starting out, are a seasoned pro or somewhere in between, there are plenty of portfolio traps to avoid and mistakes to steer clear of. But all our experts stressed that as long as your portfolio meets certain criteria – is clear and uncluttered, easy to navigate, thoughtfully curated and concisely annotated – you won't go far wrong.

Remember, your portfolio is only one of many ways you'll be assessed, along with your CV, cover email and interview. And the notion of an 'amazing' portfolio that instantly puts one candidate ahead of the running seems to be little more than a myth.

As Fortescue puts it: "I can't think of a portfolio where we've gone: 'Oh my God, that's the



person.' That doesn't really happen in real life. A curated, clear, concise, bold portfolio is the only thing we're looking for."

Beard takes a similar view. "Any portfolio that ticks all of the standard boxes is going the right way," he states. "But, you can't really define what works precisely; there is no formula, just like creativity. If it's fucking awesome work, then I'm sure I'd get over any personal bugbears." ▣

**NEXT  
MONTH**

### MASTER TONE OF VOICE

Get more from copywriting in your branding projects with top advice from Reed Words.

## DIGITAL DILEMMA

SHOULD YOU SHARE YOUR WORK AS PDFS, OR ON A WEBSITE?

**When it comes to your digital portfolio, you have two main options: presenting it as a PDF or on a dedicated website. From the hirer's point of view, there are pros and cons to each, says Madeleine Fortescue, resource and recruitment manager at Moving Brands.**

"In one sense, I prefer a PDF because I feel it's a real snapshot of the work that you feel represents you as a designer; that's a really lovely thing to have," she says. "But for ease of sharing amongst people who are going to review your work, having a URL is so much easier. If you need to download and upload a PDF, put it onto a Google Drive, move it onto the server and so on, it can be a hassle. It's much easier to have a URL because everyone can just open the email, click, and that's it," she explains.

Whether you go for a PDF or website portfolio, though, will depend on factors such as how much work you need to show, and what discipline you're in. "The medium should be right for the work, essentially," says creative director of Moving Brands, Sean Rees. "So if you're a film editor or UX designer then it wouldn't make sense having a PDF. But if you're primarily working on static design, I'd say it's not necessary to have a website for your work."

If you do opt for a PDF, you need to keep it a reasonable size; a 50MB file is not going to get you very far with most employers. But it's important to strike a balance, says Olly St John. "If it's high enough resolution, then that's cool. But if it's too low-res, that can be a problem. I'd rather see a site than a lot of pixelated images."



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# DATA IS BEAUTIFUL

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Swapping spreadsheets and formulae for sketchbooks and pens, **Giorgia Lupi** brings a human touch to data visualisation, finding beauty and meaning in our everyday lives...

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**GIORGIA LUPI** \_ An award-winning information designer, Giorgia Lupi is co-founder and design director of Accurat, a data-driven design firm with offices in Milan and New York. She is co-author of *Dear Data*, an aspirational hand-drawn data visualisation book, postcards from which are in MoMA's permanent collection. [www.giorgialupi.com](http://www.giorgialupi.com)

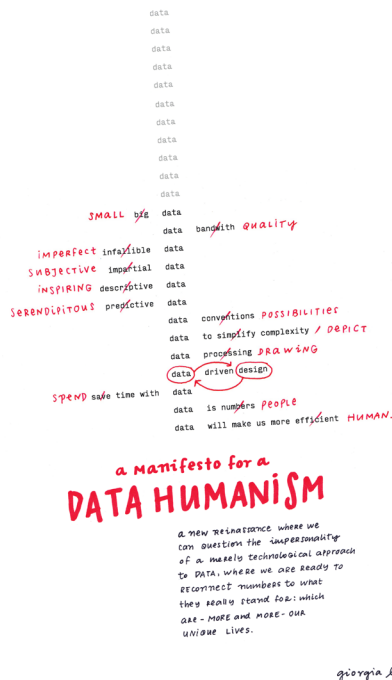
■ WORDS: Nick Carson PHOTOGRAPHY: Caterina Clerici





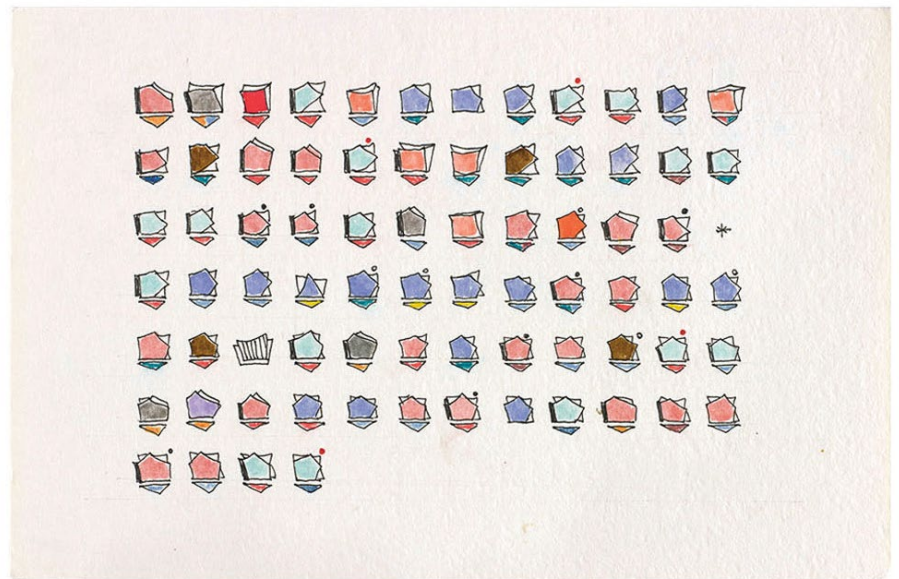






GIORGIA

week fifty-two



Above: Lupi's Data Humanism manifesto is about how data visualisation can help make data more meaningful.

**D**ata visualisation doesn't have to be impersonal. In fact, for Italian-born, New York-based information designer **Giorgia Lupi**, the opposite is true. Her beautifully handcrafted realisations of very personal data bridge the gap between digital and print, exploring visual models and metaphors to represent dense, rich, data-driven stories.

Her multi-award-winning work has been exhibited worldwide, and challenges the impersonality of data, designing engaging visual narratives that aim to connect numbers to what they stand for: knowledge, behaviours, and ultimately, people.

Following her engaging talk at Design Indaba in Cape Town (see page 16 for our event report), Lupi chatted to CA about her refreshingly analogue approach to data...

**You said in your talk: "I sketch with data in my mind, not in my pen." How does this work in practice?**

For many, data visualisation may be associated with heavy programming skills, complex software and huge numbers. Believe it or not, lots of data visualisation designers use old-fashioned drawing on paper as their primary design tool: we sketch with data to understand the numbers,

and how to organise them in a visual way to gain meaning out of them.

Sketching with data introduces novel ways of thinking, leading to designs that are uniquely customised for the specific type of data problems we're working with, as opposed to relying on the standard approach.

I don't have access to the actual data with my pen and paper, only to its logical organisations. This is an invaluable asset to focus on the meaning of the information. Instead of being overwhelmed by millions of numbers, we focus on their nature.

**Big Data is a fast-growing area of interest in design – can analogue processes such as yours help make huge datasets easier to relate to?**

The 'promise' of Big Data is clearly to provide a level of measurement and control over aspects of business, society, and our personal lives that we didn't think possible before.

I believe, though, that in order to unlock the true potential in Big Data, we must focus on what the data represents, not on the numbers themselves. Unfortunately, in many industries this sudden craze for Big Data has been interpreted merely as a technological challenge, while we think a true revolution will come if we keep context, stories and human qualities at the centre of our efforts. The whole point is to make it meaningful and contextual; smarter, smaller, and more understandable.

In the Renaissance, European intellectuals ended the Dark Ages by placing human nature – instead of God – at the centre of their world. I believe something similar needs to happen with the universe of data.

Data is treated like the keeper of infallible truths for our present and future. To make data faithfully representative of human nature, we need to design new ways to include empathy, imperfection and human qualities when we collect, process, interpret and display it.

**The hand-drawn approach is more emotive, but also less accurate than a computer. Does this matter?**

A dataset can lead to many stories. Data filters our reality in a highly subjective way, and from quantity, we actually get closer to quality.

Data has a unique power to abstract the world, but factors such as how a dataset is collected, and which information is included – and omitted – directly determine the course of its life. I'm not saying that accuracy is impossible, but I believe we need to embrace imperfection with data, all kinds of data.

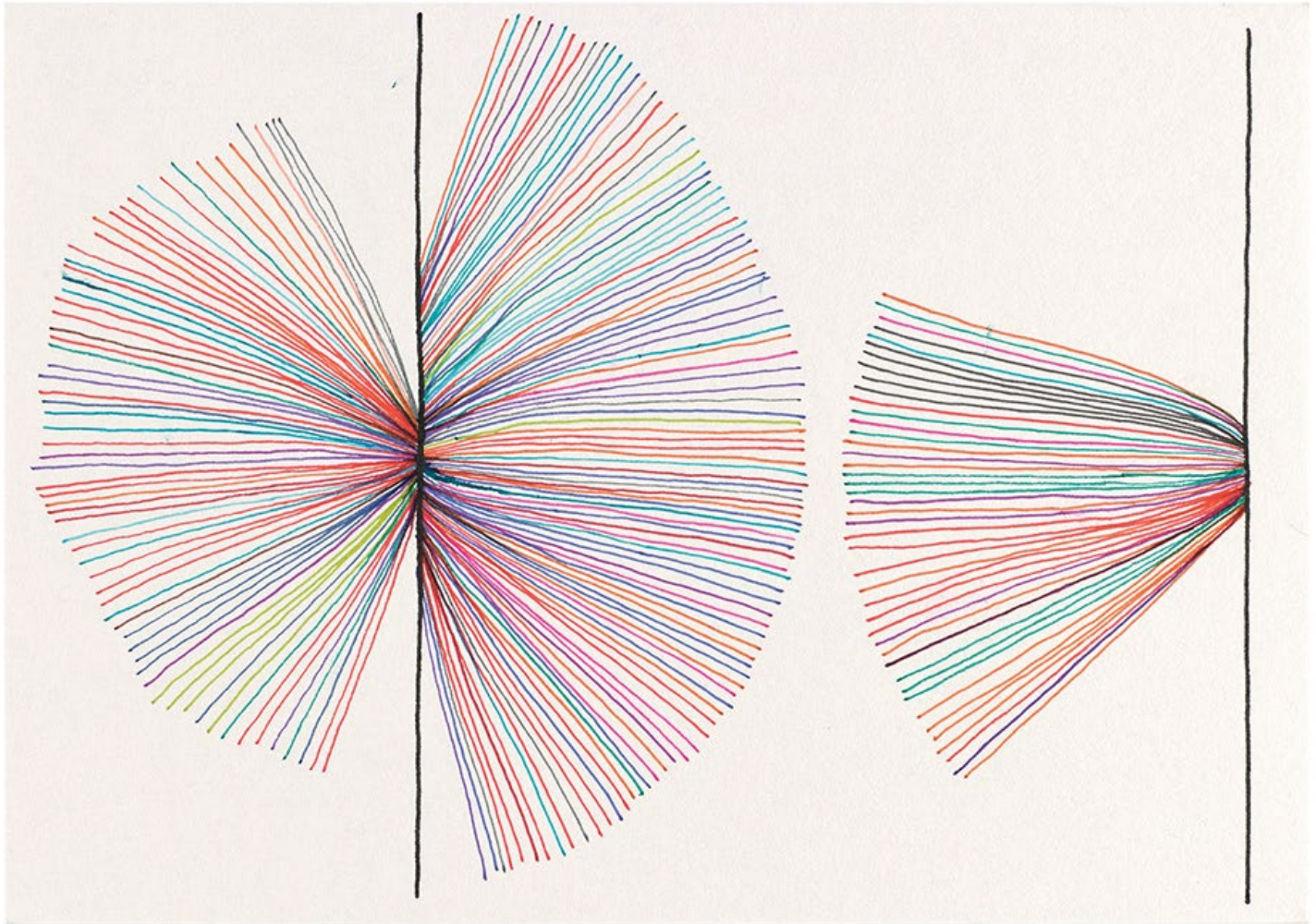
Data is almost never a perfect description of reality. Data-driven doesn't mean unmistakably true – it never did. Data is primarily human-made. If it comes from a sensor, a human being designed that sensor.

It's time to leave behind any presumption of absolute control



a week of complaints

Stefanie



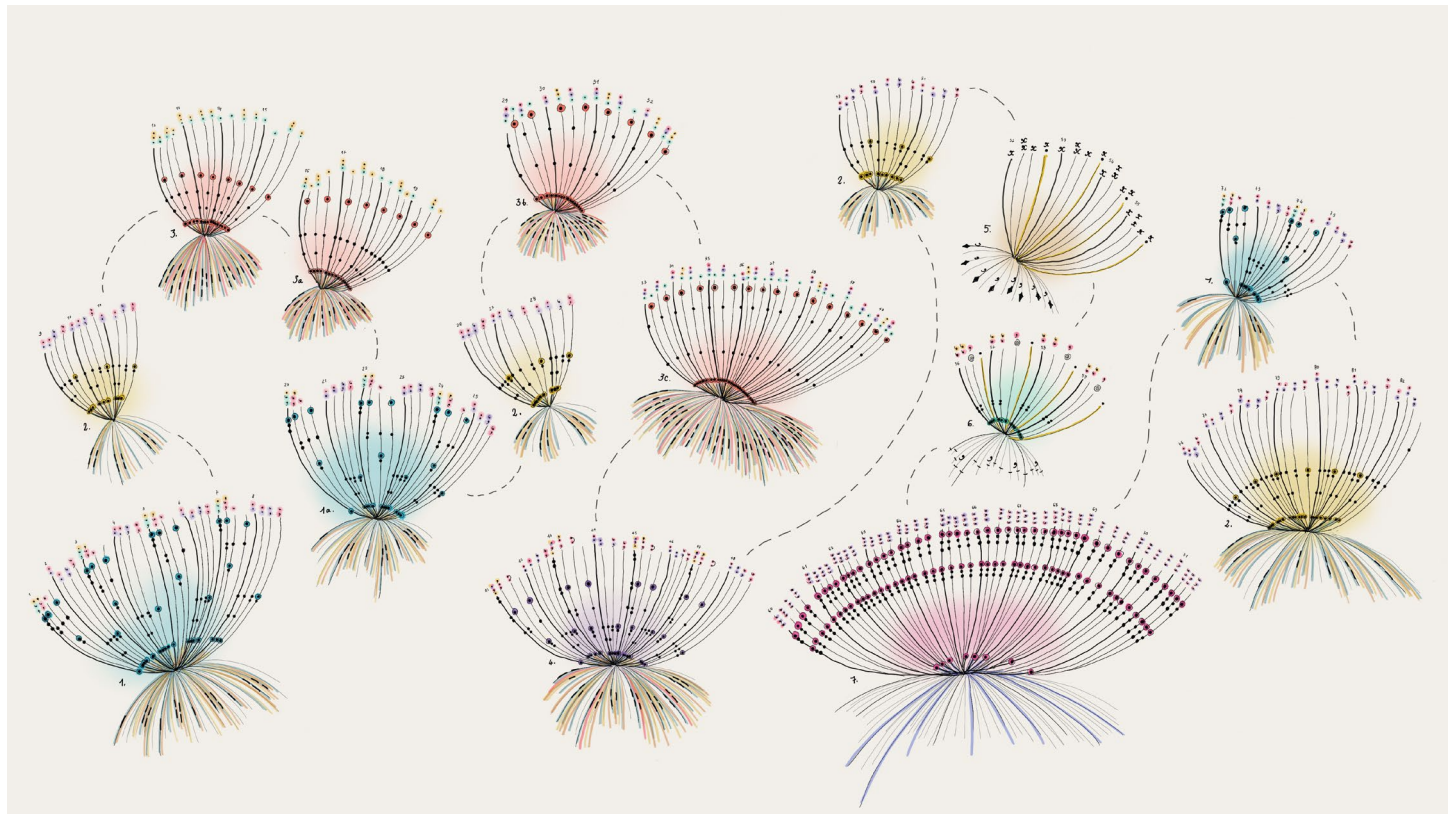
Above: Created in collaboration with Stefanie Posavec, Dear Data is a personal project that documented and visualised daily activities. Shown here are complaints made during a week.

Left: Dear Data was published in September 2016, and acquired by MoMA for its permanent collection two months later.









■ and universal truth, and embrace imperfection and approximation; to use data to feel more empathetic, to connect with ourselves and others at a deeper level. The more effort we put into researching and translating, the easier the reader will understand and relate to the stories we tell.

This requires a paradigm shift in the way we represent information visually. We should learn how to render more qualitative, nuanced aspects, as well as how to visualise uncertainty and imperfections.

As we showed with *Dear Data*, when it comes to personal data, even small quantities of it – or the lack of it – tell us a lot about ourselves. They celebrate the incomplete, imperfect yet precious human details of life.

**For *Dear Data*, you exhaustively recorded and analysed a huge range of daily activities. Which were the most interesting and revealing?**

Many of the weeks' topics provided unexpected insights, especially the ones where we were forced to focus on our inner selves. Topics included, for example, negative thoughts, indecisions, feelings of envy or gratitude, our most private

moments, relationships with close friends and time spent alone.

We not only quantified these moments, but added anecdotal details. Doing this brings you closer to their real meaning, and you start to make correlations and understand things on a multifaceted level.

I believe that addressing your darkest sides and obsessions in form of numbers, then counting and reporting them, helped me not be afraid of them anymore. In a way, they become data! The sort of objectiveness that counting implies helped me to overcome the fear of addressing those tricky topics.

Even topics that could seemingly be more superficial were interesting. In the first week, we tracked how many times we checked the time. By adding context to each log, I revealed my endless anxiety about being late, even though I'm always on time!

**Your collaboration with guitarist Kaki King captured all her hand movements when she plays. In your *Design Indaba* talk, she mentioned that this made her hyper-aware of her actions. Surely this can affect the nature of the behaviour itself?**

I believe that manual data collection is inevitably more meaningful than the use of 'frictionless' apps that gather data without you lifting a finger. While self-tracking apps are useful – who wants to count all the steps they take in a day by hand? – there is incredible value in engaging in this effort, even for a short time.

Hand-counting your data and analysing it manually helps you get to know it – and yourself – at a deeper level. Noticing and counting actions becomes a ritual that makes you more aware of your behaviour, and your surroundings.

The best art and design projects I've seen have a particular level of personal hard work, painful work that is visible in the process, and this generally means they invested a lot of themselves into these projects.

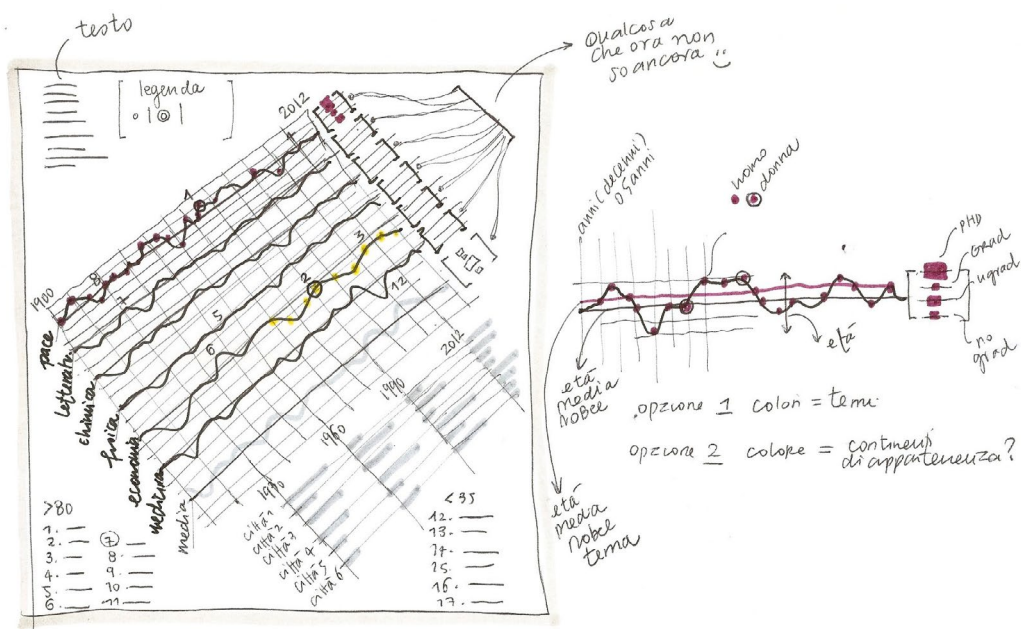
**Do projects like these represent a new form of creative expression?**

To be a data visualisation designer, you have to find new languages. You also have to make visuals that can become magnetic to people that are not familiar with data practices.

I believe that loading any kind of analytical representations with ■

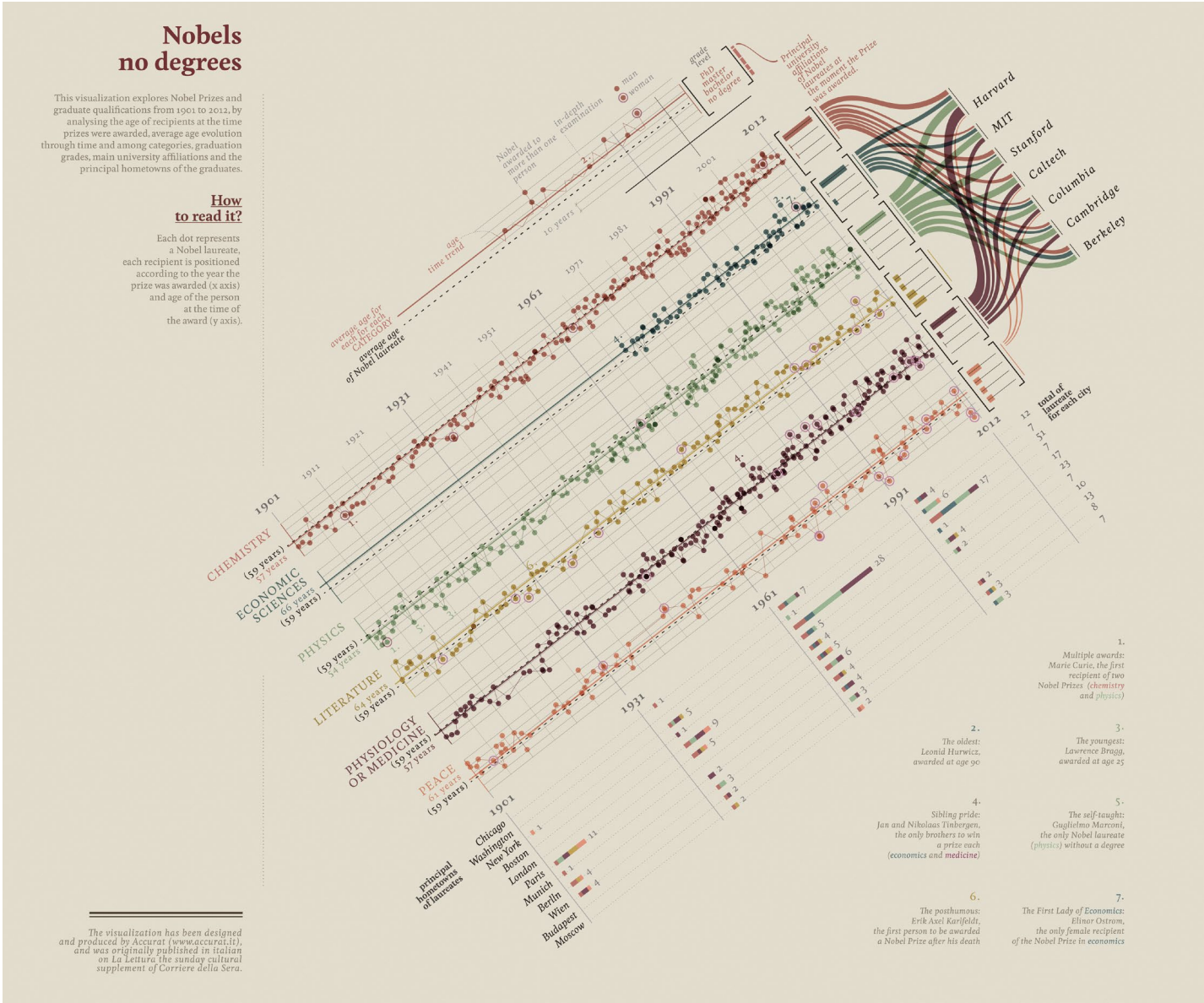
Above: Premiered at Design Indaba 2017, *A Dialogue Between Four Hands* is a collaboration between Giorgia Lupi and musician Kaki King that visualises every movement, touch, and gesture that King does with her hands as she plays her guitar.





Left: Sketch for La Lettura, the cultural supplement of the Italian paper Corriere della Sera.

Below: This visualisation explores data about Nobel Prizes and Laureates from 1901–2012.



a week of doors

Stefanie



Above: Another visualisation from Dear Data, showing doors passed through in a week. "Data is often considered impersonal, but this project aims to highlight the opposite, using something 'cold' to communicate messy, emotional, human lives," explains Lupi.

► emotional investment produces attention rather than distraction. It creates worlds that are evocative and nameless at the same time, as long as we respect the data, and don't manipulate the information.

Successful designs can balance convention – forms that our minds are familiar with – with novelty: new features that engage and delight people. There isn't a unique truth in data visualisation.

As Stefanie [Posavec, Lupi's collaborator on Dear Data] and I wrote in a Medium post after the Dear Data acquisition from MoMA, there have been various debates in the data-visualisation community that seek to define what exactly the discipline is – what is data art, and what is data design? – and whether to 'enjoy' a visualisation you should know if it was meant to be an artistic exploration or a design project.

When we hold Dear Data up to these definitions, it doesn't quite fit. It might be art, it might be communication design, it might be data visualisation. It is probably all three, but its interdisciplinary qualities are an asset, not a failing.

By working in the fuzziness and the in-between spaces, revelling in being truly interdisciplinary, we made a project that stood out, and made an impact outside of

our community through its very nature of not quite fitting.

So I believe the questions here, rather than setting boundaries and definitions, should be: 'How we can keep exploring, guessing, imagining, 'hunching', trying to inspire feelings, as visual communicators who use images and symbols rather than words and numbers?' and 'How can we be faithful to scientific accuracy, while allowing space for exceptions to flourish, and bring a range of new possibilities to the table?'

**Do you have any advice for fellow data visualisation designers, to give their work a more human touch?**

I would say, remember that data is a tool that we use to describe reality. It's a placeholder for something else, and never the real thing. I believe working with data means designing ways to transform the abstract, the uncountable, into something that can be seen, felt and reconnected to our lives and our behaviours.

Although not everyone can do a project that's as hyper-personal as Dear Data, for example, data visualisation designers can make their interpretations more personal simply by spending time with any type of data. This is the only way we can unlock its profound nature, and shed light on its real meaning. ▣

## GIVE DATA THE HUMAN TOUCH

Giorgia Lupi reveals her five-stage process

### 01 PUT THE DATA IN CONTEXT

"Dig deep into the context of the data," advises Lupi. "Where and how was it taken, and what does it represent?" Next, immerse yourself in the numbers to understand why they're unique: "What are the patterns, the stories hidden in these numbers?"

### 02 FIND VISUAL INSPIRATION

Lupi draws inspiration from many sources, such as music notations, abstract artwork, architectural drawings, and shapes found in nature.

### 03 CONSIDER THE BIG PICTURE FIRST

Next, organise the data on a macro level. "I rarely use real data here," says Lupi. "Just plan the overall architecture of the visualisation with the data in mind."

### 04 DEVELOP KEY ELEMENTS

Now focus on individual data points to decide how to represent them through shapes, colours, or other features according to the variables you have.

### 05 TEST AND REFINE YOUR SOLUTION

The final phase involves running various digital tests on the actual data, before prototyping and tweaking the final visualisation, either on paper or digitally.

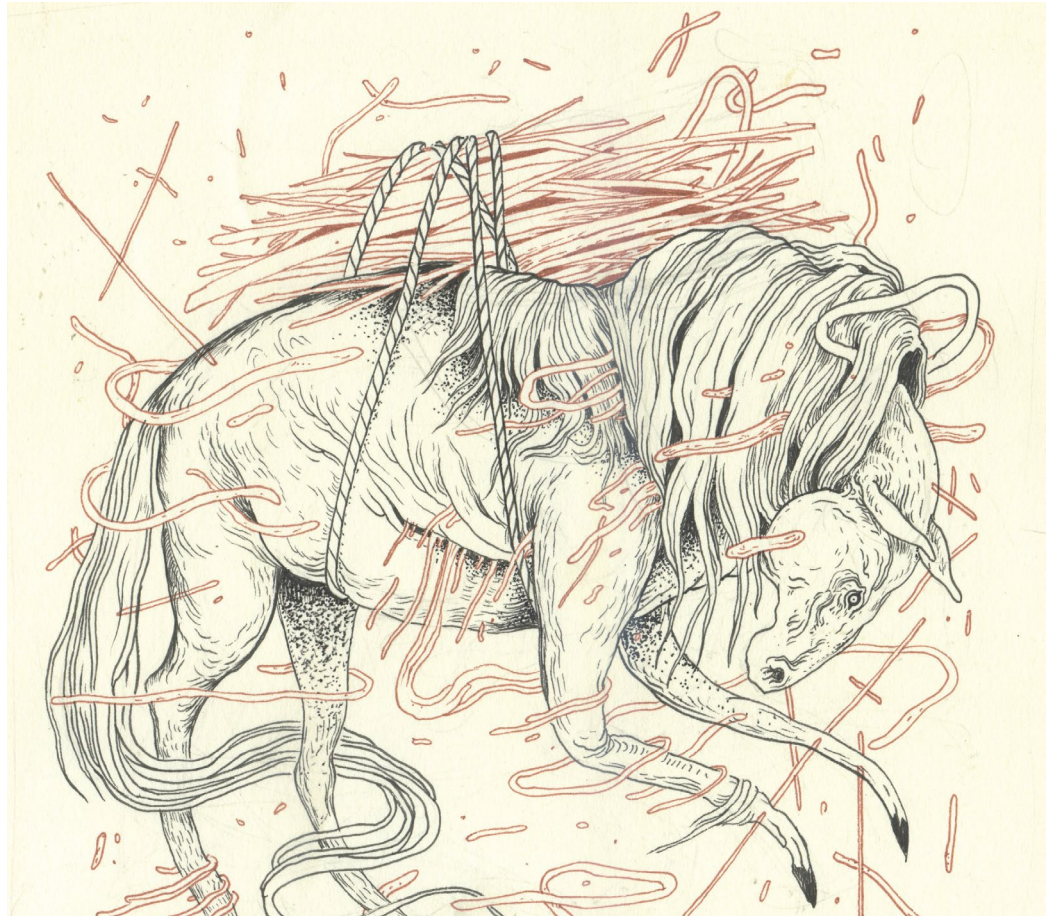


# COLLIDING WORLDS: WHERE TATTOO DESIGN MEETS ILLUSTRATION

Tattoo Master editor **Trent Aitken-Smith** explores the growing trend for graphic designers and illustrators to try their hand at tattoo design









**A**round 2010, I was hanging out with a group of tattoo artists, discussing the rising popularity of tattooing. We thought it was a wave that would soon crash, leaving only the diehard behind. How wrong we were! In the last seven years, the tattoo world has exploded. With the help of television, as well as social media, tattooing has been dragged out of the shadows and into the global spotlight. Where once it was looked on as an outsider art form, it is now considered at the forefront of creativity and development.

If you look back over the history of art, whenever an art form becomes popular, it attracts artists from outside of the medium – artists who recognise that there is potential to play and expand their own creative path. This is true for the current trend in tattooing; one where commercial illustrators and designers are crossing over into the tattoo world. And conversely, where tattoo artists are lending their skills to commercial projects.

### DESIGNING THE OUTCOME

Nomi Chi, a tattooist and visual artist based in Vancouver, showed an interest in illustration early on. At the tender age of 12, she was trying to sell commercial art, and at 15, Chi discovered tattooing through a combination of a rebellious teenager's attraction to the subversive side of art, plus the burgeoning growth in tattooing and the run of tattoo-related television shows and social media. Chi attended university, where she studied illustration, but over the years found that she had distanced herself from illustration as an applied art, and moved into an area that straddled the line between gallery art and illustration.

"Tattooing seemed like a pretty organic development, although at the time I was determined to do concept art for video games and movies," says Chi. "I had a lackadaisical apprenticeship, which I landed through sheer luck. At the time, I had very little knowledge of tattooing or tattoo culture, and I had only ever seen a tattoo machine once before."

Martha Smith, a tattoo artist based in London, who studied illustration at Camberwell College of Arts, also found the move into tattooing a natural progression of her artistic development – the freedom of process found within tattooing being just one aspect she was drawn to. While at college, Smith quickly realised that the course was incredibly concept-led. Preferring process-based work, she started printmaking, and it was with this medium that she began developing an aesthetic that would later translate into tattoos.

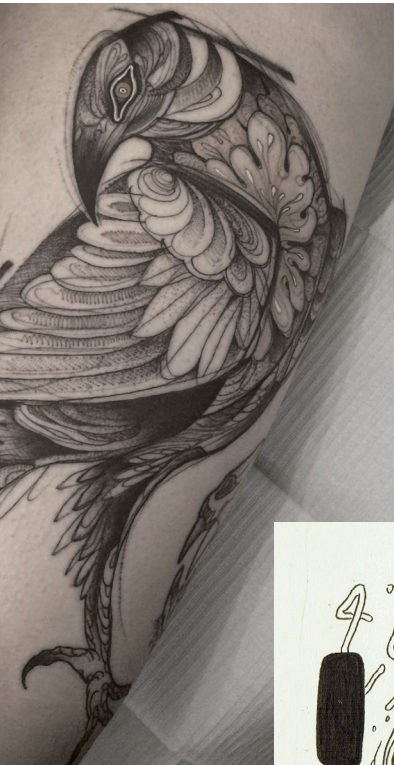
Although comfortable with tattooing, Nomi Chi thinks maintaining a healthy level of anxiety about her work helps her stay humble.

Many of Chi's tattoos feature animals, or hybrid animal/human forms.



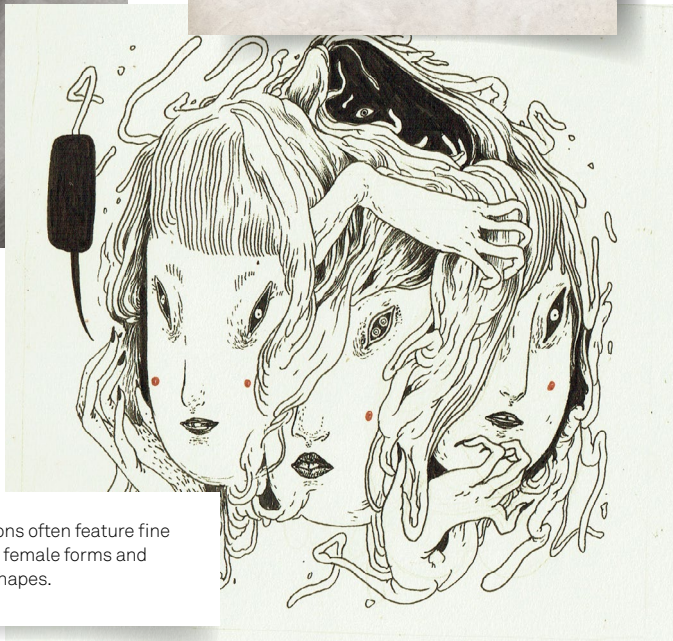
This piece, entitled *Maybe She'll Live So Long That She Will Forget About Me*, was done in gouache and ink.



**NOMI CHI**

*How do you think  
illustration is different  
to tattooing?*

"I don't see the differences between working on skin, or off skin, as limitations; they're just different mediums, with different strengths and contexts. Of course, skin offers some unique challenges: my favourite is how it atrophies over a lifetime and how the artwork changes with it. I find it quite beautiful when a tattoo is obviously lived-in and faded, but that's just me."



Chi's illustrations often feature fine lines, abstract female forms and serpent-like shapes.



Chi "grew up in a bookstore," and was surrounded by narrative art from a young age, which is perhaps what sparked her interest in illustration.

# TIPS FOR DESIGNING TATTOOS

OLLIE MUNDEN SHARES HIS  
ADVICE ON TATTOO CREATION

## 1. KEEP IT SIMPLE

"As with any brief, whether tattooing or illustrating, you need to design with the size and location of the area being covered in mind," says Ollie Munden. Another thing to consider is that tattoos blur over time, so it's important to make sure the line work has room to breathe and you're not trying to pack too much detail into a small space. "I've had quite a few people come to me with endless ideas that they want all compressed into one tattoo, which won't stand well," states Munden.

## 2. RESPECT TRADITION

After failing to understand why so many people had similar imagery on their tattoos, Munden has learned to respect traditional tattoos. "I used to wonder how more contemporary illustrative and graphic work would look tattooed, but the more I've researched, drawn and learned the more I've fallen in love with classic designs," he says. Munden has now added his own twists on the 'classics' and says he finally understands how they got their name.

## 3. BE BOLD

Whether you're illustrating or tattooing, the end result should be bold, striking and make a statement, says Munden. "At the end of the day, I want all my artwork to be a strong piece of design, so I've learnt to try and strip back ideas into the bare essentials and always have a focused eye on the end result being bold, eye catching and cool looking," he explains.



■ “I always had an interest in tattooing, but before I attended art school, most of the tattoos I saw were traditional, or realism tattoos, which never really appealed to me,” she says. “Then, Sang Bleu Magazine came out and I was exposed to new artists such as Liam Sparkes and Maxime Buchi, who came from illustration and graphic design backgrounds, but were tattooing in a similar way to the way I printed. It was then that I thought it would be something I’d like to pursue.” Smith points to many parallels between the process of printing and tattooing, citing the permanence and strength of line, the understanding of the tools and the medium as examples. “There are also many similarities in the way a brief is structured in tattooing and illustration,” she adds. “It felt like a natural pathway into full-time illustration work, but with constant briefs and a sustainable income.”

Both Chi and Smith moved into tattooing while keeping their illustrative careers going at the same time. The guaranteed income from tattooing gave them the freedom to pick up side work in visual art and illustration, something which is echoed in many other tattoo artists’ careers.

The converse of this approach is seen in artists such as Ollie Munden, who works as a lead designer for ilovedust, as well as having his own studio, Megamunden. His beautifully illustrated book, *The Tattoo Colouring Book*, came out in 2013, and was an opportunity to combine his love of illustration and tattoo design. Unlike Chi and Smith, Munden doesn’t actually tattoo.

Aasen Stephenson is another tattoo designer, but not a tattoo artist. His work came to prominence when he used a tattoo machine to etch his designs onto a range of stylish leather shoes. “I’d been doing some bits of artwork for Jeffery West, and we started to throw around the idea of customising a shoe once it had been made in-store, in front of the customers,” he recalls. “It took a while to figure out what would work and give the best results, but engraving seemed to be the best option.” Stephenson tried using several engravers until he hit upon the idea of using a tattoo machine, which gave good results, “and also looked cool in-store.” Although new to tattooing, Stephenson created all the designs freehand, without using stencils. “I just ordered a kit online,” he recalls. “Originally, we went with the cheapest, as I still didn’t know if a tattoo machine would give the best results. The kit was £55, you can imagine how bad it was! But it was a start and since then I’ve bought better machines.”

With previous experience as a body piercer, Liz Clements took a slightly different route

into tattoo design. Having enjoyed the studio environment of piercing, she did a pop-up shop with Occult Tattoo in Brighton, who ended up taking her on as an apprentice. “A lot of my illustrations were inspired by tattoo culture, so in terms of the themes there isn’t a lot of difference,” she says. “I have always really loved traditional tattoos and I think that’s evident in both my tattoos and my illustrations.”

## TATTOO TABOOS

But what can artists interested in combining the two mediums expect when they start to move between them? As with all artistic endeavours, there is no limit but the imagination. However, Smith believes that her college introduction to illustration helped make the transition easier. “My studies certainly helped with tattooing,” she states. “Illustration projects have a quick turnaround with a quick brief. This helped when it came to working alongside customers to develop their custom tattoo designs.” Smith also cites printmaking as having helped her tattooing. “For one, it strengthens your arm and shoulders, as well as getting you used to the permanence of an image. People that are used to drawing in pencil, or painting in oils, have a transformative way of creating, where things can be edited, evolved and manipulated. With a woodblock, or a piece of lino, once that mark is carved, it is carved, much like a tattoo,” she explains.

As with any crossover in art, the challenge is in identifying what works in the change of mediums, and what has to be adapted. For Chi, these differences are nothing more than a mindset – a different approach to a similar outcome. “My tattoo process is very particular. I try to be very transparent with regards to my interests and the stylistic direction in my portfolio,” Chi explains. “When I tattoo, I feel people know what they’re getting. When I am taking project requests, I look primarily at the subject matter and secondarily at the narrative behind the subject, if my client provides one. When working as a visual artist, I work best when I’m given some preferences for subjects and stylistic direction, and am allowed to compose the elements however I see fit.”

Liz Clements found the move across to tattooing a little challenging. “The practical side is totally different, so I have to balance the complexity of my designs to correspond with my skill set, which I have found quite tough,” she says, adding that designing to fit a body part is totally different to working on a flat surface. “I often do three or four tracings when I’m creating the stencil for tattoo, so the image kind of builds up in layers, and you



Four back piece designs feature as large-scale prints in a high-end Japanese restaurant called Tattu in Manchester.





The tail end of a hand-built Harley Sportster, which was commissioned by ilovedust to celebrate its 10th birthday, and has a tattoo aesthetic.

The cover from Ollie Munden's tattoo themed colouring book. The book features over 100 designs inspired by Japanese and Western tattooing.



One of two guitars Munden collaborated on with Jeff Nichols. Both guitars were laser engraved with intricate tattoo-inspired artwork.



# OLLIE MUNDEN

*What first attracted you to the world of tattoo design?*

"I think the bold lines, simple colours, and the fact that a lot of animals, plant life, skulls and snakes can be found in the tattoo world is what drew me to it. With a tattoo, you need to condense information into a hard hitting, easily readable image; much like designing a logo in the graphic design world. I like solving design briefs and tattooists must do that daily. Tattooing has such close links with music, skateboarding and motorcycle culture; all things I'm interested in, so it all goes hand in hand for me. Most of all, I just love the imagery in the world of tattooing."

A set of hand-painted Russian dolls – each representing a Nike Snowboarding pro rider – created to accompany Nike's boots.



T-shirt design for motorcycle lifestyle brand Monday Mo Co. Munden worked with Mark Graham to create the branding and product design behind the brand.



■ have to rearrange as you go through the design process. For this reason, Clements thinks that tattoo design is a lot more complicated and long-winded compared to designing for print.

For Stephenson, moving completely into the world of tattooing is a path that remains unexplored for the moment. "I've thought about it a lot, but not made the step yet," he says. "I guess it's because I enjoy getting tattooed. I think if I learned how to tattoo, I may not look forward to getting tattooed." Explaining this idea further, Stephenson recalls his previous experience of learning the guitar. "I was always in awe of people who played, but then as I started to learn, I viewed guitarists differently," he says. "I'd think to myself, 'Ah, I know how to do that now!' It kind of took the magic away. Therefore, I guess, I will always want to get tattooed, rather than actually do it," he smiles.

But this hasn't stopped people getting Stephenson's designs etched into their skin. Besides his paper cutting work, he has also drawn up a few designs specifically for tattoo purposes. "I love the idea of getting my work tattooed on skin, it's such an honour for someone to give you that trust, to be with them forever," he remarks.

Munden has also had his work tattooed onto clients, but has reservations about this approach. "Prior to creating the book, I'd designed quite a few tattoos for people. It was, and still is, something I'm on the fence about, as I'm not a trained tattooist," he explains. "There are so many amazing tattoo artists out there, I find it a bit backwards coming to me for the design. I always tell anyone that asks that it is the most expensive way to get a tattoo and probably not the best." Munden did, however, design his left sleeve piece, and learned a lot about placement and how much detail should be included, or left out, along the way. Since the release of *The Tattoo Colouring Book*, he has also started to see more of his designs tattooed on other people. "I've seen the book pop up in various tattoo parlours and I've had lots of people tag me on Instagram in pieces they've had tattooed from the book. Some people write to me and ask permission, some send me a picture once it's done, either way it's all good with me. I love seeing that the work has been well received and people are getting tattooed," he grins.

## LEARNING TO SAY NO

Managing expectations and knowing when to back off a brief is important, whether you are working on or off skin. As Chi points out, tattooing is high demand work. Unlike a commercial brief, you are often expected to come up with ideas on the fly. ■

Martha Smith's early interest in printing ignited the aesthetic that she would later translate into her intricate tattoo designs.



Smith's unique tattooing style was born of her love of graphic design and printing.



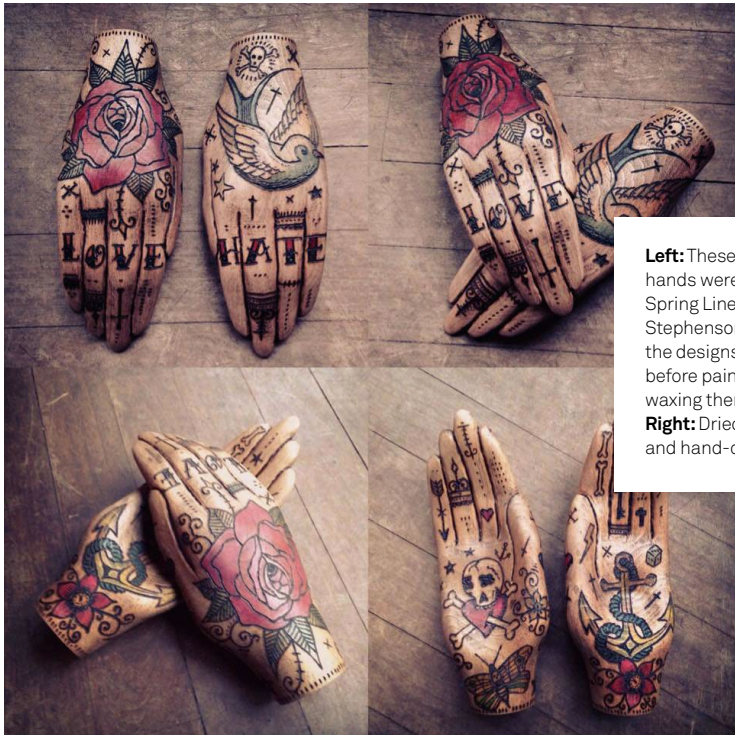
### MARTHA SMITH

*What do you enjoy the most about tattooing?*

"My favourite part of my job is being a tradesman as I really like working with my hands. I enjoy developing a skill and a craft, and I like to judge my accomplishments by the cleanness of my lines and the blackness of my healed tattoos. I don't think I would ever get the same physical exhaustion or technical achievements I crave as a tattooist through illustration alone."







**Left:** These wooden hands were handmade by Spring Line, Northampton. Stephenson burned the designs in freehand, before painting and waxing them.  
**Right:** Dried, pressed and hand-cut leaves.



**AASEN STEPHENSON**

*What are your career highlights?*

"A lot of my work is based around cutting paper, so working with high-end paper company Fedrigoni was fantastic. I've also worked with Rebecca Street, a London-based dress designer, who worked for Mulberry and McQueen as part of her own brand. I also worked on a project with Formula Fashion, again using hand-cut leather – the brief was to combine leather, Formula 1 racing and fashion."

**Below:** The Mötörhead logo was hand engraved freehand onto a custom pair of boots.  
**Bottom:** A pair of engraved Jeffery West shoes that Stephenson was commissioned to do at the company's shop in Tapei.



**Above:** A hand-cut leather dress for designer Rebecca Street; using Street's dress patterns and Stephenson's paper-cut designs.



■ But at the end of the day, a brief is a brief and knowing your limits is important.

“At the moment, I struggle to keep up with demand, as a result I have to turn down most proposals which are sent to me,” says Chi, who does not show her drawings to clients prior to the day they’re getting tattooed. “I have had many frustrating years of back and forth interactions between clients, and from that I developed my intake process and bedside manner,” she explains.

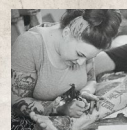
Though Stephenson doesn’t tattoo, the approach to his illustrative process is similar to that of a tattoo artist, where compromise and reworking are often a necessary evil. “All my work is commission-based, so I do have to go through it with the client to ensure that we are both happy. Sometimes customers can come in with some crazy ideas, which is great! But once on paper it doesn’t always work,” he admits. Over time, Stephenson has learned to avoid briefs that he can’t do technically, or doesn’t want to put his name to as he doesn’t think they’ll work. “Getting things wrong is all part of the journey,” he says. “And being self-employed, there is no boss you can ask when you get stuck. Over time you learn and hopefully it gets easier!”

Munden has also learnt what will work and what won’t over the years. “In my commercial illustration work, I’ve passed projects over to fellow illustrators because I’m too stretched for time and would rather someone else give the client a better end result. Other times, I don’t feel I’m right for the project,” he explains. “It’s important the work I do take on is close to my interests,” he says. “I want to make sure I’m giving each project 100 per cent dedication. It’s a nice position to be in as I’m not solely relying on Megamunden to pay my bills, but it also means anyone coming to me for what I do will get a quality end result. I make sure of that.”

So what does all this mean for artists, on skin and off? It’s unnatural for creativity to be limited, and art should ideally have no boundaries. Therefore, any crossover or middle ground for artists to explore should be nurtured and encouraged. And with the art world turning towards tattooing as a new field for expansion, the crossover is creating a generation of artists who continue to blur the lines. This allows for more growth in creativity in general, and a lot more people sporting beautiful designs that will stay with them forever. ■



Liz Clements has always loved traditional tattoos, and this passion is evident in both her tattoo designs and her illustration work.



#### LIZ CLEMENTS

*What advice would you give to those wanting to break into tattoo design?*

“Draw all of the time. Get a decent portfolio together and network. Getting tattooed is the best way to make contacts within the industry. I couldn’t really tell you a sure-fire way to get yourself into an apprenticeship, as essentially I was just in the right place at the right time, but you must be prepared to work hard, and have no money for a couple of years at least.”



Clements believes that tattoo design can be much more long-winded and complicated than designing for print.

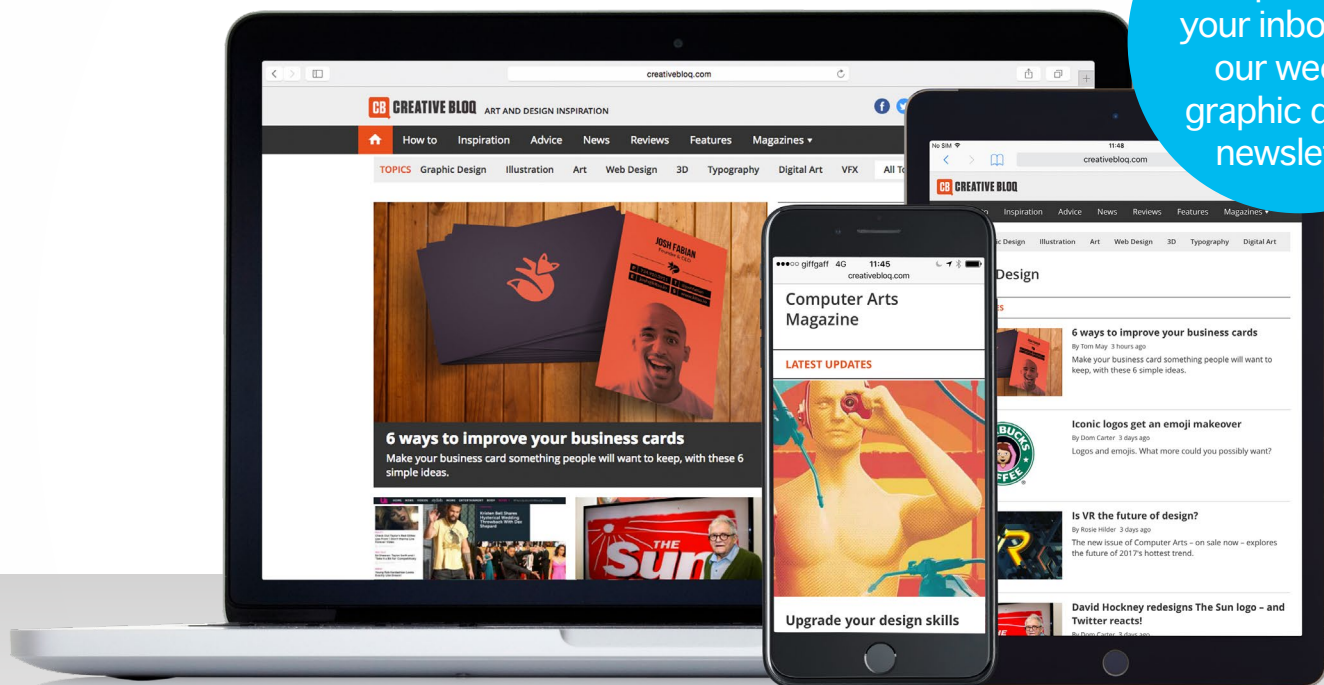
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## PART 6

This special 10-part series, in partnership with D&AD, is curated by this year's New Blood trustee Tom Manning. Each advice-packed article reveals the skills it takes to survive and thrive as a young designer in the modern industry, and this month, Tom explores how to banish indecision and become more productive.

*Subscribe today to guarantee you get the rest of the set: see page 42.*

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Felicia Simion: The Playground

**PART 1** Fear and confidence often go hand in hand. Part one revealed why the fear of doing something bold is often essential for creativity.

**PART 2** In the second part, we examined why fulfilling a design brief is about understanding your audience, and how it's like meeting a new person.

**PART 3** Part three saw us explore the importance of discovering your career goals and purpose, and how these relate to making money.

**PART 4** Transforming your digital ideas into captivating solutions was our topic for part four, with the goal of becoming more interesting than Netflix.

**PART 5** Last issue, we examined how to get the most out of a mentor in eight simple steps. Spoiler: mentoring is not just a one-way process.



Helmi: Bugatti

## FEATURED WORK

These images show past winning and shortlisted entries of the D&AD Next Awards, which discover and showcase the world's best rising photographers and directors. The shortlist and winners of the 2017 awards will be announced at London's D&AD Festival on 25 April 2017.


# HOW TO BE MORE PRODUCTIVE

Avoid being an indecisive ass and do more with your time, advises **Tom Manning** in part six of our D&AD New Blood series

**B**uridan's Ass is a story about a donkey that is standing halfway between a pile of hay and a bucket of water. The donkey keeps looking left to the hay, and right to the water, trying to decide which to go for: hay or water, hay or water? Unable to decide, the donkey eventually dies from hunger and thirst.

Like the donkey, I've always been indecisive. Perhaps you also know the feeling of chasing many different goals at once and getting nowhere. Maybe you feel frustrated that the world seems to want you to choose one thing, because you want to do it all. You're thinking: 'Why do I have to choose? I don't want to choose!' But this is short-term thinking.

Unlike us humans, a donkey can't conceive the future. If he could, he'd realise he could go first to drink the water, then eat the hay. Similarly, I've often felt that if I can't achieve all of my goals within the week, then they'll never happen. But of course this is total donkey shit. Your career is long, and you can afford to experiment – spending a little time on one project and, when you're finished, moving on to the next. With any luck, you won't die from hunger or thirst in the process, either.

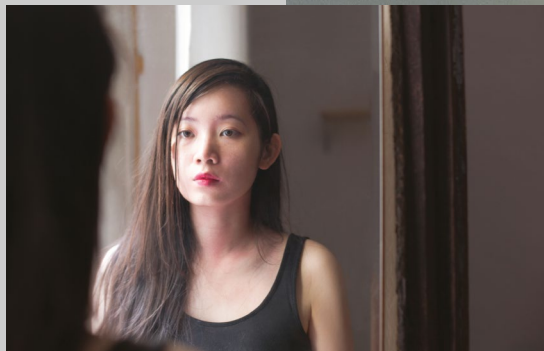
This becomes even easier when you think less about what you want to be, and more about what you want to do. Because it's the doing that counts. Your career won't be shaped by what you know, but by 



**TOM MANNING,**  
D&AD NEW BLOOD  
TRUSTEE 2016

*Tom is carpeing all the diems. Attempting not to make advertising as a junior creative at Havas London, he was also elected D&AD New Blood trustee in October 2016. In his spare time he makes, designs and codes fun things on the wild wild web. He wrote this bio himself, in the third person, to try and make it more legit.*





Tam Hoi ying:  
Being Disappeared

Alexandra Serrano: Daydreaming Girl



## CREATIVITY IS LIKE A MUSCLE, AND YOU'VE GOT TO PUT IN THE HARD WORK. FOR EVERY SINGLE MINUTE YOU SPEND CONSUMING, SPEND FIVE CREATING

■ what you do again and again, day in day out. Reading books, watching films or the TV, going to talks and visiting galleries may feel like expanding your cultural repertoire, but they can just as easily be a form of procrastination, and may even become a source of anxiety for some people.

Ira Glass, host of the radio show *This American Life*, describes this difference between knowledge and ability as 'the gap.' "For the first couple of years that you're making stuff, what you're making isn't that good," he says. "But your taste, the thing that got you into the game, your taste is still killer. And your taste is good enough that you can tell that what you're making is kind of a disappointment to you," he explains. What's the best way to close that gap, according to Glass? "Do a lot of work. Do a huge volume of work."

Then, when you're surrounded by precarious towers of paper, throw away everything that doesn't make you say, 'Hell yes!' You're often asked to make

big bets with your ideas – with your time or money or both. So if an idea doesn't elicit more than a weak nod, ditch it. You need strong views, loosely held. If an idea makes you say, 'Hell yes!' there's something in it, so pursue it with conviction. But also be open to other ideas, other opinions and better information – be prepared to change your mind.

The world is changed by your example, not by your opinion. Often, writing and drawing act as a form of working out; it's no surprise that school kids who show their working out in maths exams get more answers correct – the process of doing is a form of thinking. Creativity is like muscle, and you've got to put in the hard work. For every minute you spend consuming, spend five creating. If you can't be bothered spending the time applying what you've just learned, then you're consuming the wrong thing.

Likewise, be wary of trends. Once you have a trend, you have lots of people doing it. And once you have lots of people doing it, you have lots of competition and little differentiation. So avoid trends, and instead develop a sense of mission. Does the work you're making help to create a world you want to live





Laura Thompson: Senseless



Thomas Sabatier: Redemption Road

in? Does it inspire people's trust, or command their attention? Be relentless in pursuit of your mission, and be prolific in whatever you decide to do.

As creatives, we're often obsessed with the quality of our projects. And don't get me wrong, it's good to have high standards. But the idea of quality over quantity can be misleading. I believe that quantity can lead to quality. It's only by doing a lot that we figure out what works and what doesn't – what we like and what we don't. It's this commitment to action that reverses the paralysing effect of choice. Smashing out project after project will not only make you a better creative, but it'll ensure that you never get stuck between the hay and the water. ■

## THE PRACTICE OF PRODUCTIVITY

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR MORNINGS, AND MAP OUT YOUR PRIORITIES

It sounds crazy that creatives would need to put in place time to create. But if you feel yourself spending more time managing than making, that could be exactly what you need. I find Tim Ferriss' Morning Pages exercise incredibly useful as a way to kick-start my productive self and focus on the day ahead. It goes like this...

### 1 RISE EARLY

Wake up 30 minutes before you have to, avoiding all screens and distractions if you can, and grab yourself a pen and a notebook.

### 2 MAKE A LIST

Write down three to five things that are making you anxious or uncomfortable. These are often the things that you don't want to do, and keep pushing from one day to the next.

### 3 PRIORITISE YOUR TASKS

For each item, ask yourself: 'If this were the only thing that I accomplished today, would I be satisfied with my day?' Put another way, which task, if done, will make all the other things on the list easier, or even irrelevant?

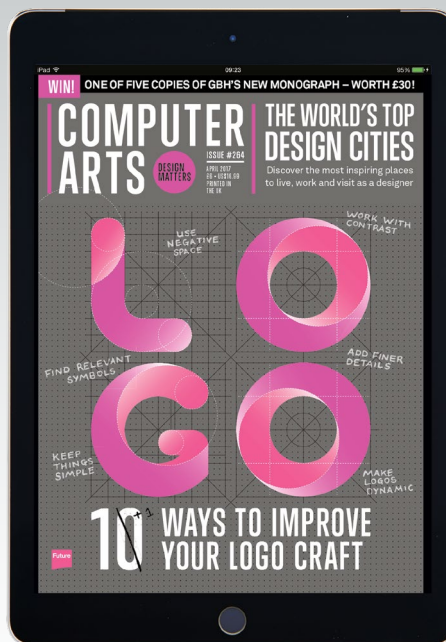
### 4 GET FOCUSED

Block out several hours to focus on one of the things on the 'yes' list for the day. Piecing together 20 minutes here and there won't cut it. Don't worry if things pop up during the day, that's life. Just deal with them if they're urgent, and then bring your focus back to the task at hand.



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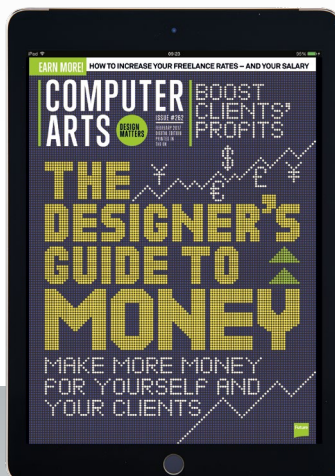
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- How to improve your logo craft in 11 steps
- The best cities around the world for creatives
- Get more from your creative mentor
- Video insight: how Purpose designs with substance



## ISSUE 263 MARCH 2017

We reveal whether VR really is the future of design, discover how freelancers can harness print, and discuss the growing trend for short, intensive design courses.



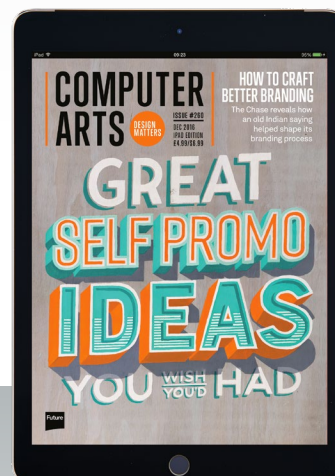
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## ISSUE 261 JAN 2017

Get the low-down on the colour trends of 2017, find more time for your side projects, and discover the secrets of fulfilling a brief with D&AD New Blood.



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Computer Arts goes behind the scenes with world-leading designers as they reveal their working processes...



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**VIDEO  
INSIGHT**

## HOW TO MAKE A BRAND MORE ICONIC

How Hammersmith-based agency Pearlfisher, which is celebrating its 25th birthday this year, combines insight, strategy and design to create desire for iconic and challenger brands.

**SHADES  
BEFORE  
GRADES**

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## CLEAR VISION FOR KAIBOSH

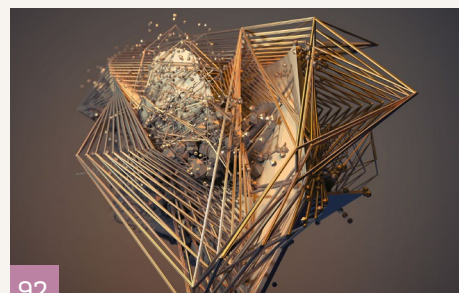
Stockholm-based agency Snask reveals how it developed a cheeky personality for eyewear company Kaibosh.



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## VIDEO INSIGHT

# HOW TO MAKE A BRAND MORE ICONIC

25 years old this year, Hammersmith-based agency **Pearlfisher** creates desire for challenger and iconic brands through a three-pronged strategic approach

**C**elebrating its 25th birthday this year, Pearlfisher has come a long way since co-founders Jonathan Ford, Karen Welman and Mike Branson decided to translate the tenacity they saw in Japanese divers, fishing for pearls, into the ethos for their new agency.

“Our ambition was to start a company that would dive deep to get that thing of value, that precious gem,” says Ford. Over the last quarter-century, Pearlfisher has gone from three to 100 staff, with offices in London, New York and as of last year, Copenhagen and San Francisco.

Initially specialising in packaging, the agency has broadened its remit to a broad spectrum of branding, fuelled by three divisions – Futures, Strategy and Design. “Futures is all about really understanding how desire is changing,” continues Ford. “Then the Strategy team focus that information in alignment with the diverse range of client briefs that we get.

“That gives the Design team both a big cultural backdrop, and a strategic focus, so they can effectively design with a creative laser beam.”

Here, Ford and acting creative director Dan Gladdon discuss how the agency’s unique approach helps turn brands into icons...

### Can you define the difference between challenger and iconic brands?

**Jonathan Ford:** Challenger brands and iconic brands behave in different ways, but they’re quite connected. We believe that no brand is born iconic. You become that over time. It’s just a question of how short that time frame is. Google, 15 years. Truly iconic. Coca-Cola, 100 and whatever years. Iconic. And we believe those brands that have become iconic, started out as a challenger once.

You have to look at the challenger brands around today to see if they have potential to grow into something iconic. They could grow, become a mass brand and not have any love, or they could grow and stutter and just fall away.

### How do you make a brand iconic?

**JF:** Ultimately the thing that connects these types of brands is a strong sense of desire. When a challenger comes onto the scene, they somehow cut through and make sense of something. You knew it needed to happen, but they were the ones who did it. They grow with you, and that desire stays as they become accepted on a mass scale. That’s when you really get an iconic sense of love.

For challengers, it’s about being expressive. Icons are about nurturing what’s got them to that point. The most successful iconic brands also recognise where they came from. They’ve kept that passion, and still have their challenger spirit embedded in there. You have to think about how you’re nurturing this specialness.

### Tell us about Pearlfisher’s Futures division. How do you approach trend forecasting?

**JF:** It’s all in-house. Our Futures team is led by Sophie Maxwell in London and she has a global role. There are various contributors in the other studios, notably in New York. We’ve been at it for a long time, and it’s evolved along the way.

We actually hate the word ‘trend’ here. A trend is often a result of something that’s already happened. We’re interested in the thing that’s happening, or about to happen. Those are the cultural shifts. For everything somebody says will be the big trend of the future, we could show you five counter things that will be happening. Disruptive language is everywhere, and when

### PEARLFISHER

Pearlfisher works with challenger and iconic brands around the world, with clients including Innocent, Starbucks, Jamie Oliver and Cadbury. The agency was highly commended at CA’s Brand Impact Awards 2016 for its Manomasa project.  
[www.pearlfisher.com](http://www.pearlfisher.com)



Watch the videos on our YouTube channel: [www.bit.ly/ca265-pearlfisher](http://www.bit.ly/ca265-pearlfisher)



■ you're living in a world of disruption, you need to understand how to clear the noise. You want to see or hear something that stands for something clearly, and all that 'future thinking' is there to achieve cut-through, and ultimately create that gem in every brand.

#### How do you apply insights in practice?

**Dan Gladdon:** It isn't a clear line. As Jonathan says, we talk about them not as trends, but as as shifts – and how we can communicate those through design. It's exciting to talk about new ways of communicating. We work with Sophie's team to create language that can resonate with consumers at any level.

It's all about the big idea. What problem are we solving – is it a new form of food? A new drink? A new piece of communication? How do we keep things fresh, but with a reason behind it? How we distil that, and deliver that message, is key.

#### How much two-way communication is there between Futures, Strategy and Design?

**DG:** Let's try and throw 'strategy documents' out the window. That, for me, already becomes a rigid thing. Things should be organic, within reason. Conversation happens, development happens. We have our three divisions, but they're not at three different stages of the project. We don't just do the Futures insight, then pass it on to Strategy. If we did it like that, you wouldn't be able to join those three dots. It needs to be a cohesive journey. It's organic. Things change.

It's not: 'This is what you need to achieve, this is the brief,' before we even get involved. For me, that's the excitement. I'm a very strategic thinker, and I wouldn't want to have a strategic brief put in front of me without knowing why it's there.

#### Do you have any advice for creative directors in smaller studios to develop iconic brands?

**JF:** Focus on the idea. An idea can transcend borders, cultures and scale. A brilliant idea can come from the youngest junior designer who may be terrified of putting a thought on paper, or a strategist who's thought about it for two months.

**DG:** From a directional point of view, it's then how you guide that idea, grow it, push it. We're always going to be learning and growing. As Jonathan says, you'll still get challenged by interns. Great, why not? They're the fresh thinking on the staff.

**JF:** Great ideas are key, but you also need incredible talent to help that come through. If you're not a conceptional thinker, and you don't focus on quality through your staff, it's probably time to go and become an estate agent. ■

*Pearlfisher is a previous BIA winner. Enter your best branding at [www.brandimpactawards.com](http://www.brandimpactawards.com)*

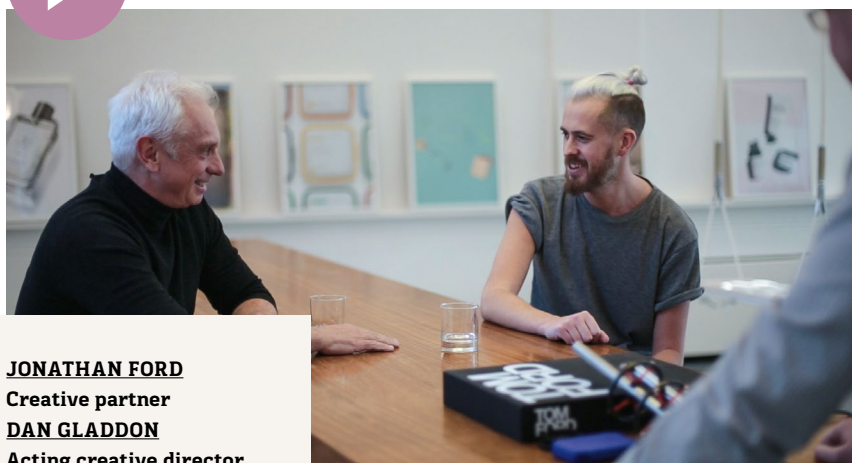


#### Left and below:

Pearlfisher created the theoretical brand Allay as part of a project with Surface magazine to "imagine the future of marijuana." Allay provides stress, anxiety and pain relief by harnessing the power of the marijuana root in the form of three products: a wristband, an edible oil and oral tablets.



**TAP TO WATCH THE VIDEO NOW**



#### **JONATHAN FORD**

**Creative partner**

#### **DAN GLADDON**

**Acting creative director**

Jonathan is one of the three co-founders of Pearlfisher.

Dan joined the agency four years ago. After a formative spell in the NYC studio as a design director, he returned to London as acting CD.

#### **BUILD AN ICONIC BRAND**

In our first video, creative partner Jonathan Ford discusses Pearlfisher's three-pronged strategic approach with acting creative director Dan Gladdon, including how design can help brands on the journey from challenger to iconic.



**Above and right:** The design language Pearlfisher created for non-alcoholic beverage Seedlip is influenced by the distillation of natural ingredients, informed by herbal remedies of the 17th century.



## FOUR RULES OF BRAND STRATEGY

Strategists Molly Rowan Hamilton and Kristoffer Fink Parup share the tricks of their trade

### 1. Look to the future to see the present

"The big question always is: 'what do you want your brand to become ultimately?'" argues Kristoffer Fink Parup. "Where is it 10 years down the line, and why is that so?" By asking this kind of open question, he adds, you can reveal the deeper thinking behind a brand, as well as any underlying issues or blind spots. "We might have a different opinion about what's going to be relevant, how the industry is shifting, and we can have a conversation about that."

### 2. Engage in informal conversations

Interacting with clients on a conversational level feels less like an interview and helps humanise the process. "Often clients will express things they don't necessarily realise they're expressing," observes Molly Rowan Hamilton. "Ideas and solutions can just come about, and it's our job to see them, and extract meaning." When it comes to challenger brands in particular, she continues, it often helps to start by asking what their competitors are doing wrong.

### 3. Understand the brand's trajectory

Pearlfisher works with challenger and iconic brands, and everything in between: "We map brands out on their trajectory upwards towards iconic," explains Parup. "Of course, once you reach iconic status, there's still competition – it's not like some kind of nirvana where no one's going to touch you." It can still pay to have that scrappy challenger mentality to shake things up, and Parup gives Virgin as a great example of that.

### 4. Tailor strategy to market position

Depending on where a brand is on that trajectory, the goal of the strategy is different. "For a challenger brand, you need to know what to challenge, and how," Hamilton points out. "For iconic brands, it's more about nurturing – understanding why people love you, and cherishing that to keep you as iconic as you possibly can be for as long as possible." Often, she adds, people's affection for a brand originally stems from its original challenger mentality.



TAP TO WATCH THE VIDEO NOW



#### **MOLLY ROWAN HAMILTON** **KRISTOFFER FINK PARUP** **Strategists**

Molly and Kristoffer are part of Pearlfisher's Strategy division, and work with clients to develop their brand vision. They have been at the agency for two years and one year respectively.

### MASTER BRAND STRATEGY

Our second video sees strategists Molly Rowan Hamilton (pictured) and Kristoffer Fink Parup walk through how the Strategy division works at Pearlfisher, and reveal some of the tools and techniques they use to get to the heart of a brand.





## FOSTER THE RIGHT STUDIO CULTURE

Jack Hart and Ashleigh Steinhobel discuss four great ways to create a positive working environment

### 1 Go above and beyond

Jack Hart's advice for smaller agencies keen to punch above their weight is to turn potential weaknesses into opportunities. "Two people with a laptop can run a design studio," he says. "Think: 'What can you offer your clients, above and beyond creative excellence, that a larger agency couldn't?' 'What additional value can you add, due to your size and level of nimbleness?'"

### 2 Empower your staff

Ashleigh Steinhobel points out that an agency is defined by its people – and it pays to invest in, and empower, your staff to ensure genuine buy-in to the vision from everyone. "Make sure they know they're valued, and that they have the freedom to craft a path for themselves," is her advice.

### 3 Give people purpose

On a related note, Hart adds, it's important for staff to have a sense of purpose when they come to work. "The autonomy we have here is incredible, from small things like where we sit, to the perspectives and ideas that we approach clients with." Make sure employees feel they are doing meaningful work that interests and excites them.

### 4 Encourage collaboration

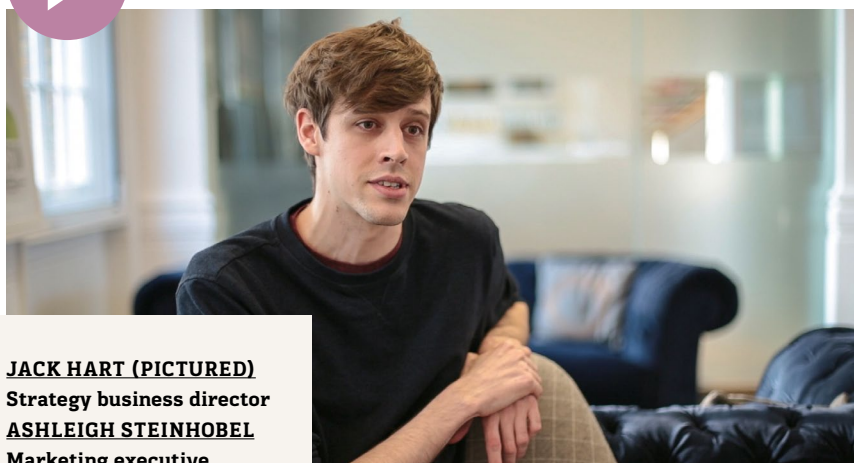
Pearlfisher has a gallery space downstairs, which includes two swings and once also transformed into a giant ball pit. Shared spaces like this help foster a collaborative spirit. "Our reception turns into a bar on Friday nights, and we have a cool summer festival that brings all four studios together," says Steinhobel. "Everyone's passionate about this place."



**Above and left:** Pearlfisher drew on Wagamama's past as a challenger brand by adopting human-centered design. Positioning the chain as the icon of the high street, the entire system – from the food preparation and delivery system, to structural packaging design – now connects to the brand idea of 'sharing positively from bowl to soul'.



**TAP TO WATCH THE VIDEO NOW**



**JACK HART (PICTURED)**  
Strategy business director  
**ASHLEIGH STEINHOBEL**  
Marketing executive

With a strategy background, Jack now works across all three divisions, consulting on various projects. Ashleigh joined a year ago, and works on profile-raising activities and communications.

### DEVELOP YOUR STUDIO CULTURE

In our third video, strategy business director Jack Hart and marketing executive Ashleigh Steinhobel discuss why Pearlfisher's collaborative culture makes it an exciting place to work, and why the little things can make a big difference.

**Right and below:**

Pearlfisher's creation of tampon brand F       used branding to drive a cultural change in the use of tampons in China, where only two per cent of Chinese women use tampons, compared to 70 per cent in the West.



## THREE WAYS TO TURN STRATEGY INTO GREAT DESIGN

Jess Phillips and Mike Beauchamp reveal how they interpret the findings of Pearlfisher's team of strategists at the coalface of the design department

### 1 Balance knowledge with passion

Pearlfisher's Futures, Strategy and Design divisions collaborate closely throughout a project's life cycle, and the agency tries to balance depth of experience with fresh creative thinking when choosing designers to work on any given brief. "Some of the bigger brands we work on require a certain level of insight and knowledge of that brand," admits Mike Beauchamp, "but we often balance that with a younger, more energetic level of design. Certain people are also suited to certain types of projects, so we try and cater to that too."

### 2 Don't let strategy be a straitjacket

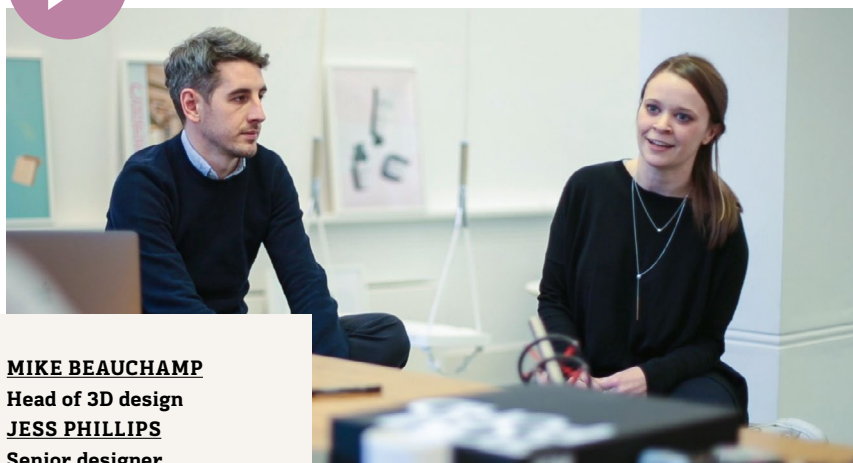
"Obviously you have to listen to the research and the strategy, but try not to let it contain you," is Jess Phillips' advice. "Strategists are a great sounding-board for ideas, but don't be too closed in by the theory. Use it as a springboard, rather than a net."

### 3. Never be afraid to ask why

One of the best pieces of advice that Beauchamp received from his university tutor is to always question why something is there, and that's particularly true when it comes to brand strategy. "If somebody can't explain it, then there's a conversation that's worth having," he insists. "People can be apprehensive about questioning things, because they're concerned about not knowing what they should know. One of my favourite things about designers is that they're kind of nosy: an inquisitive nature is inherent in a lot of creative outputs. I would always encourage people to keep questioning why."



**TAP TO WATCH THE VIDEO NOW**



#### **MIKE BEAUCHAMP**

**Head of 3D design**

#### **JESS PHILLIPS**

**Senior designer**

Trained as an industrial designer, Mike works across 3D projects, from packaging to environments. Jess has spent the last four years rising through the ranks, having joined as a junior.

### DESIGN WITH STRATEGY IN MIND

In our fourth and final video, Mike Beauchamp and Jess Phillips from Pearlfisher's Design division share how the agency balances its 2D and 3D design requirements, and how strategy fits into their creative process.

Watch the videos on our YouTube channel: [www.bit.ly/ca265-pearlfisher](http://www.bit.ly/ca265-pearlfisher)





■ PROJECT DIARY

## CLEAR VISION: KAIBOSH'S NEW IDENTITY

How Stockholm-based **Snask** developed a cheeky brand personality, an off-kilter typeface and the agency's first ever retail space for radical eyewear company Kaibosh





# **FREDRIK ÖST**

## **Founder and creative director, Snask**

Fredrik established Stockholm-based studio Snask with co-founder Magnus Berg in 2007 to challenge the conservative design scene they saw around them. Daring and sometimes pretty silly (the agency just collaborated with PangPang Brewery to develop a beer for drinking in the shower), Snask has a client list that includes Samsung, Malmö Festival, Yay Festival, Target and The Washington Post.



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**01** Snask developed this vinyl signage for Kaibosh's flagship store, featuring witty phrases.

**02** The new type is deliberately chunky and "a bit clumsy", avoiding too clean a feel.

**03** Vinyl letters crowd in the window of the shop – it was essential that the retail space felt fun and welcoming.



03

## **DESIGN BRIEF**

**Fredrik Öst**

Kaibosh started out wanting to be a trendy eyewear company, but somehow it had become serious and normal. People had started viewing the company as quite stern, and the brand was not as friendly as Kaibosh thought it was, so how the company felt didn't match up with how it was perceived. The client found our work on the internet and contacted us. Kaibosh wanted to be bolder and to feel more playful.

Kaibosh's previous identity was very Scandinavian and minimalist, using one sans serif typeface and a boring grid. Nothing was colourful or stood out. To start, we looked at all the ranges of glasses. Kaibosh has a really cool concept that challenged the whole industry when it started. Before, eyewear was so expensive that you could only afford to buy one pair of glasses every four years and then you're stuck with those glasses. Kaibosh revolutionised the industry by thinking that you could have five pairs of glasses – one for a Monday, one for a Friday, one for a lazy Sunday, and so on. The team see eyewear like accessories or clothes, instead of something that you only have one of.

A lot of companies say they want to be trendy or that their target audience is super cool bloggers, but in the end they don't want that. We had to establish whether the team at Kaibosh really wanted to be different – because we would push them and be very bold. We showed them some reference images and they were

## **PROJECT FACTFILE**

**BRIEF:** Blink and you'd miss the innovative spirit in eyewear brand Kaibosh's original branding. The company tasked Snask to bring it back in line with how it saw itself – fun, innovative and a bit playful – by developing a print campaign and range of merchandise, and fitting out its flagship Copenhagen store.

**CREATIVE:** Snask, [www.snask.com](http://www.snask.com)

**CLIENT:** Kaibosh, [www.kaibosh.com](http://www.kaibosh.com)

**PROJECT DURATION:** Six months

**LIVE DATE:** January 2017





04

instantly hooked. We didn't have to pitch for the project. We visited some of the stores to get an idea of the brand's vision, and we felt that there was a lot to build. We also felt that if we developed a personality that was more creative and more cocky, it would suit the company.

## WORK IN PROGRESS

First we spent some time focusing on Kaibosh's brand personality – it's down to earth and chatty. We decided to keep the logotype and the client didn't want to change it either. But we felt we needed another element that would complement it, so we developed the blink icon. The first cliché for optical companies is the alphabet wall chart where the letters get smaller and smaller, and the second is open eyes. We thought it would be much cooler to have closed lids, because it supports the idea that Kaibosh is not just about optics. You can have sunglasses on and they won't necessarily help your vision, but they'll make you look and feel cool.

Next, we created our own typeface to complement the logotype in-store and on signage. For the display type, we wanted it to be very chunky, almost clumsy and not stray far from the logo. We sketched the letterforms by hand, then took them into Illustrator, and translated them into a typeface in Type Editor.

We developed type-led posters, leaflets and GIFs, featuring fun slogans such as 'Shades before grades' and 'Eyes before guys'. We also developed these into vinyls for the



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04 Flyers created by Snask for Kaibosh feature the new typeface.

05 Snask developed a series of GIFs to promote the brand digitally.

06 Snappy, humorous copy dominates the launch campaign.

07 Snask created a blinking eye icon to challenge the stereotypes of an optical company.

08 Signage was developed from wood and vinyl to look as though the letters were rearranged daily.



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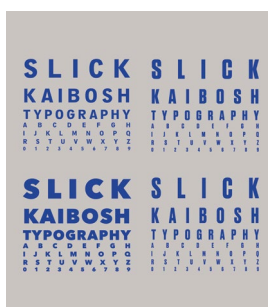
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## UNUSED IDEAS

### BLURRY VISION

Snask's Fredrik Öst explains concepts that were a bit short-sighted

We didn't want the identity to become too clean, or too 'Scandinavian'. This brand could afford to be more bold and take more risks. We tried a lot of typographic solutions, some didn't work, but the one we've gone for was the bravest of the bunch.



We experimented loads with the colour palette: we wanted something upbeat. We picked cobalt blue as one of the stronger colours from the start, so it was a case of experimenting with other colours until we got a few that worked.





## SHOP LIFT

### Snask's Fredrik Öst on creating Kaibosh's flagship store

As part of the project, Kaibosh asked us to design and build its flagship store in Copenhagen. We were given drawings of the store, and then went down to Copenhagen and took lots of photographs so we had a record of every surface that was available. The idea was to translate the fun and chatty brand tonality into the physical space as much as possible.

We put funny quotes on the wall, using the chunky typeface we'd designed. We also developed the closed eyes icon into crying eyes, with vinyl tears dripping down the door and creating a puddle on the floor, with the slogan: 'Feeling blind? Don't be sad. We do eye tests!' We developed the closed eye icon into a neon, and window vinyls that feature Kaibosh squeezed into the pane.

Colour was important – we wanted the floor to be pink, and created a stairway to heaven using the same coloured flooring, just because it's a stupid joke. We designed pretty much everything in-store apart from the glasses. The shelving system is simple, with each shelf using a different colour from the identity.

We have worked on installations – things for people to sit on, interact with or climb on – so we're used to those kind of things, but this is the first time we've done a store from scratch. We have no particular experience in interior design – no theoretical training – but we thought it would be fun to be let loose.



■ Snask created vinyl signage around the shop's interior, and also designed a glasses case that can house multiple pairs – a concept that was at the crux of Kaibosh's business model.



09 The exterior of Kaibosh's Copenhagen flagship store.

10-11 Snask used blinds as a core part of the campaign photography, as a humorous play on words.

12 Snask wanted to achieve a psychedelic feel to the imagery, shooting with a lens that gave a kaleidoscopic feel.

13 The project also included promotional material with silver foil details, stationery and merchandise.

14 A very clear pricing structure – communicated on pavement signage – is key to Kaibosh's offer.

15-17 Some examples of promotional merchandise designed by Snask for the Kaibosh launch.



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store interior (see Shop Lift). The letters are positioned off-kilter – it's more interesting because it's a project about seeing and legibility. The lettering on the pavement signs – which we made from wood – is also not straight. It's designed to look like the staff put it there fresh every time. There wasn't a huge theory behind the colour palette – of course the cobalt blue colour is strong and powerful, and we felt was a nice colour for Kaibosh. The idea was to be fun.

## CONCLUSION

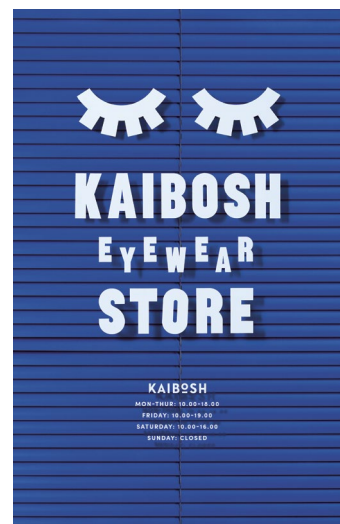
The identity itself was only a very small part of what we did. We used the icon and new type across brochures, stationery, merch (such as a towel, sweater and tote) as well as an advertising campaign. We wanted to create something really psychedelic for the campaign, so for the photography we found a lens that distorts the image in a strange way, and combined it with models wearing Kaibosh's more out-there frames. We also created several films for Instagram that used the same lens and some quirky still-life images, featuring the frames plus some objects that complemented them.

It was a great project that we loved working on. The client also really loved the project.

*“We have no experience in interior design, no theoretical training, but we thought it would be fun to be let loose”*

As an agency, when you're part of a project from the start and you have that trust, you can create amazing things. We also got to experiment in some new areas, perhaps my favourite is the glasses case. It's a physical example of the idea that you should have more than one pair of glasses as it's a case made for more than one pair, with slots like 'Monday' but also more fun examples like 'Payday' and 'Mayday'. You can alternate between them. I like it because it captures Kaibosh's business idea in one object.

We've done lots of installations, but this was our first retail space – and after doing this one, we'd love to do more interior projects. I think architecture and graphic design are merging a lot. They have similar backgrounds in a way, so hopefully we'll see more overlap. ▣



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## ■ WORKSHOP

# MASTER THE ART OF STORYBOARDING

Studio AKA's **Philip Hunt** shares his advice on how to harness storyboards to create captivating tales

NEXT MONTH

## DISNEY ANIMATION

Pro insights from the award-winning makers of *Milo Murphy's Law*



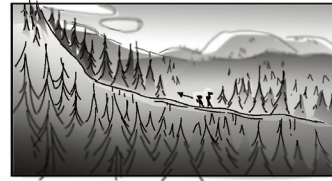
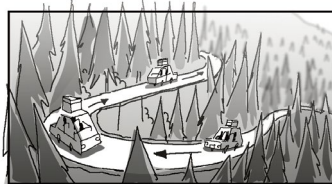


## PHILIP HUNT

Philip is a partner and creative director at Studio AKA, a multi-BAFTA-winning and Oscar/Emmy-nominated animation studio and production company. The London-based agency has a strong emphasis on story, design and character, and has produced films such as *A Morning Stroll*, *Varmints* and *Jo Jo in the Stars*, as well as creating and producing children's TV show *Hey Duggee*. Philip runs a course in story and character development as part of Pictoplasma Academy. [www.studioaka.co.uk](http://www.studioaka.co.uk)

**Opposite and 01** Storyboard panels from *The Girl & the Cloud*, which was produced by Studio AKA and Red Knuckles.

**02** The final shot of *The Girl & the Cloud*, which was art directed by Amandine Pecharman.



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## SHAPING STORIES

Time spent shaping the stories that Studio AKA is asked to tell through commercial work has trained us to think fast and with confidence, but when you pick up an idea, there can be a multitude of problems to resolve. You need a method to help you follow through on stories that lack clarity and structure, or concepts that need upending in order to work, and that's where the process of storyboarding can be really helpful.

### STORYBOARD BASICS

Starting a board is never easy – all those blank panels! The solution is not to work on one neat sheet of paper. Use small Post-It notes and scribble loads of quick and rough thumbnail ideas. Get all the ideas out of your head in any order you like. Don't feel that you have to just start at the beginning and work forwards.

When you have a bunch of images that are making sense, resequence them and discard as many as possible. Move it all about until it feels coherent and in balance. You can do all this with stick figures, and then replace everything with your character drawings once you know what you are doing, working back into the gaps any visual embellishments that reinforce the story.

One of the most common mistakes with storyboards is creating opening sequences that drag on, eating up panels with establishing shots. Your aim should be to establish a crisp, clear cadence from the outset. You can always turn that single opening panel drawing into a three-minute tracking shot at a later stage.

In terms of our working process at Studio AKA, the relationship between writing and sketching ideas and scenes is unique to each director, but what we all try and do is not lock ourselves down at the outset. Some animation directors write in sketches, others sketch in writing. The storyboarding we do starts as rough cut and paste, and we bring a working or presentation board to completion by a process of distillation. Everything remains open to question up until it's decision time.

Don't get bogged down in process when it comes to inspiration, if you purge yourself of every single random idea you can, at some point the good stuff will make itself known to you and find its place in the storyboard. Then sleep on it and reconsider it all the next day.

### CREATING CHARACTERS

At the Pictoplasma Academy, those who are selected as students often also have little or no experience in sequential or character narratives, and this can be the most challenging aspect of the course for them. I set the students simple exercises to introduce them to the concept of structural narrative. For example, I give them a series of boards to create, working through four-, nine-, 12- and 24-panel storyboard exercises, each structured around different character narratives or rules.

One very simple exercise we do at the Academy involves creating a nine-panel board in which the students' characters have three distinctive 'life moments' or events imposed on them, which must be expressed in the

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board. The three events are all linked and act as key touchstones in what must be a concise expression of life within a confined story arc.

Experiencing working with story structures that are imposed on you can be very beneficial and bring out ideas you wouldn't have otherwise thought of. Likewise, creating storyboards within restricted panel allowances pushes an artist into making every frame count. When every drawing must justify its inclusion, being able to distil a story into a small number of key frames is a liberation. That refined 'spine' can then be elaborated into a more complex narrative. Set yourself challenges or ask someone else to set you a challenge and see where you end up.

One good example of this process was from illustrator and art director Mélanie Baillairgé, who participated in the 2014 class. What worked so cleanly in her original nine panels was eventually extrapolated without loss of momentum to 40 panels, and a smartly adapted version of the narrative structure supplied.

## *"Sometimes giving feedback to others can help you think about your project in a new way"*

The process of taking her character – and herself – through imposed exercises and some unfamiliar methods seemed to ignite a creative flourish that nailed each task stage with increasing aplomb – and led to her site-specific sculpture at the students' post-academy show; an exhibition staged about six months after the course at the regular Pictoplasma Conference, where the narrative in her work had evolved further still. It's often surprising how much the story exercises offer opportunity for change. As in Mélanie's case, the process of storyboarding and fleshing out a character can continue over an extended period of time, so don't think that you are 'done' with your character after one storyboard.

### DEFINING CHARACTERS

To tell any story, you need to understand your character. One way to do this is to ask the basic questions a scriptwriter always asks: Who is your character? What do they want? What do they do to get what they want? What do they achieve in the end? You might also try defining

this in another nine- or 12-panel board as the act of visualising those answers really forces you to examine your character.

The surface of a character is described in line or shape on the page, but what really lies within the drawing is given focus by our willingness to engage with what that character can emot and convey. Story, design and biography all influence how a character rises beyond mere mark-making and becomes real to us. At Studio AKA, we work out these elements in the studio on projects big and small, to help us go from a transient character that's briefly seen, to a complex focal character within longer narrative storylines. If this also communicates something about the artist that created it, then the character finally comes alive to us.

I think Mélanie's lonesome, and introspective character, emerging from hidden depths to experiencing life in a series of short mournful steps – all towards an inevitable demise – captures something of this. The character's singular purposefulness is captured in each of the frames, and I never question if this person exists or not. I know them through the drawings immediately. Mélanie set this character out in nine frames, acted out the storyline and created the final elaborated set of panels in a way that really exceeded expectation.

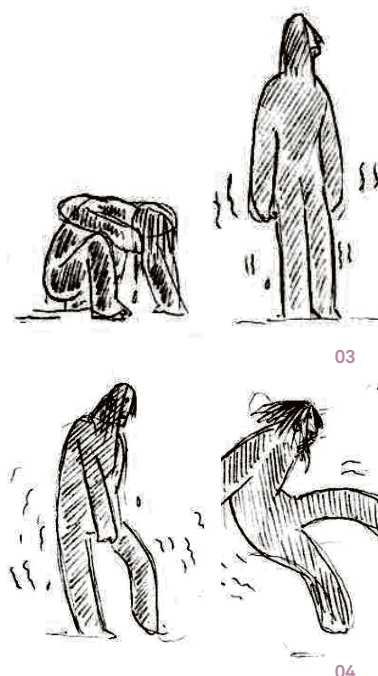
### THE VALUE OF FEEDBACK

One of things that works well at Pictoplasma is when we bring everyone together to critique and work on selected examples of what has been created in the sessions. Students are asked to talk the room through what they have done, and often this process is a creative challenge that few have experienced, but all benefit from. It is always easier to know what is amiss with other people's work than your own, and sometimes giving feedback to others can help you think about your own project in a new way. We redraw the boards 'live' according to what the rest of the room can suggest. This enables the person in the spotlight to justify as well as improve their work, empowering them to embrace the process of a productive critique in their work.

I would encourage you to do the same with your characters and storyboards, ask others to give you feedback and try to take criticism in a constructive manner, thinking about how you can channel other's comments into your character and story to make it better. Even if you don't agree with their suggestions, it's still a good idea to try them out – you might be surprised at the outcome! ■

03-05 Part of a storyboard done by Mélanie Baillairgé at Pictoplasma Academy 2014.

06 Mélanie Baillairgé's Emerged, developed from her initial storyboard.





07 An exercise by Andrea López and Gabriela Rodríguez at Pictoplasma Academy 2016.

08 An early storyboard for *The Girl & The Cloud*.



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## STORYBOARDING WORKSHOPS

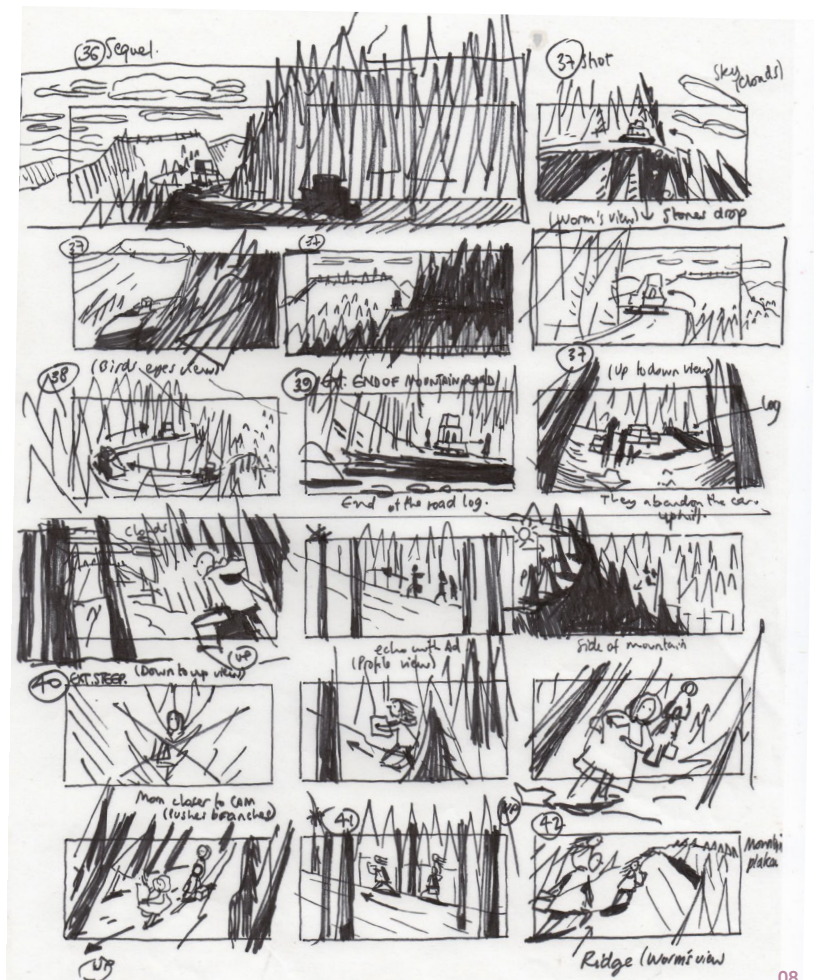
### REFINE YOUR OWN CHARACTERS AT A PICTOPLASMA ACADEMY MASTERCLASS

Philip Hunt is giving a workshop on character narration and storyboarding at the Pictoplasma Academy masterclass at the end of September in Berlin, and in October in Mexico City. The course includes advice and help defining a character's attributes, adding biography and depth and creating storyboards. It also includes work on pitching, and attendees will receive intense feedback both from him and other group members.

[www.academy.pictoplasma.com](http://www.academy.pictoplasma.com)



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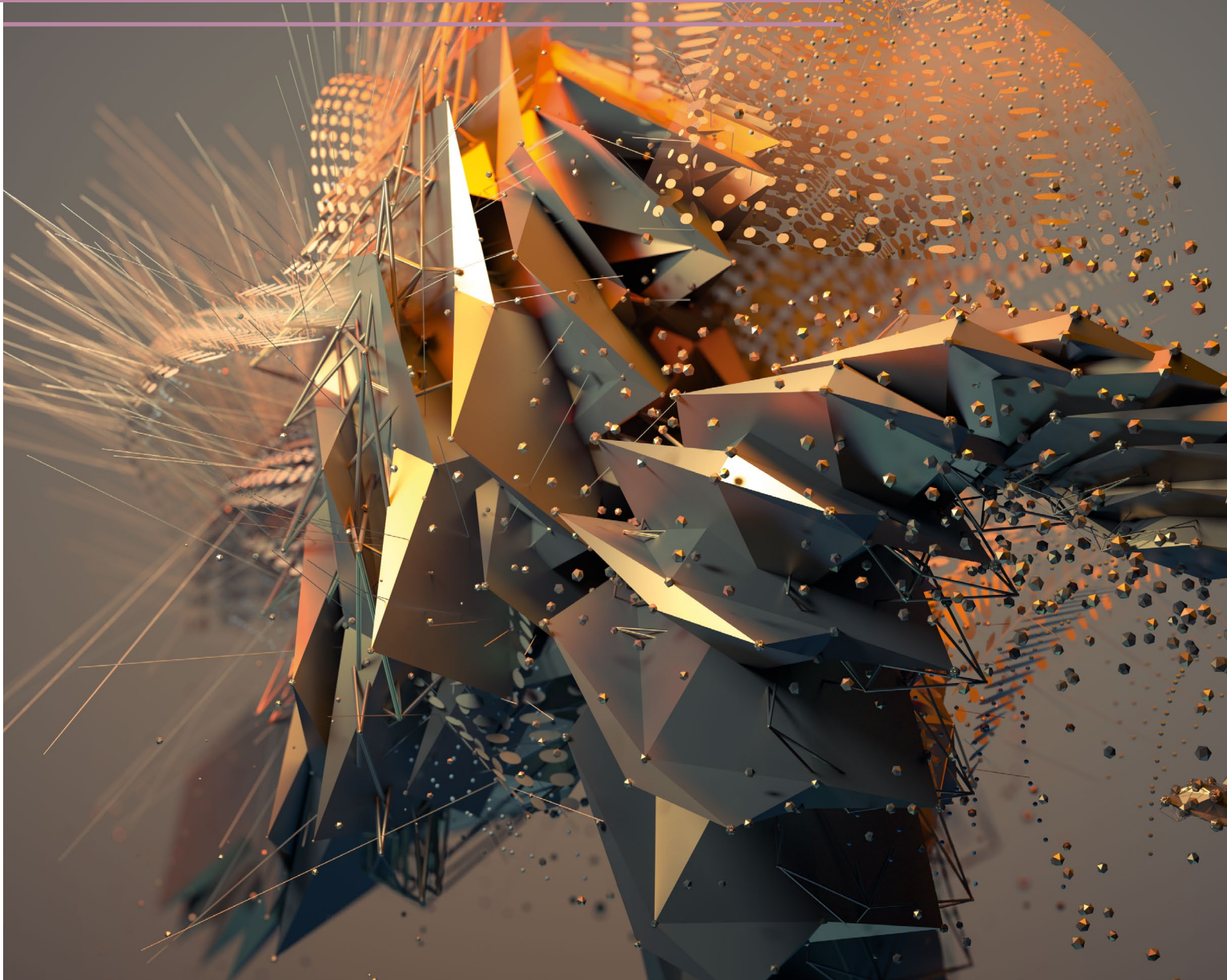
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## ■ PROJECT DIARY

# A NEW MOVEMENT: LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA'S IDENTITY

**The Partners** and **Tobias Gremmle** used motion capture to visualise the passionate conducting of new musical director Sir Simon Rattle, as part of a stunning new identity for London Symphony Orchestra



## PROJECT FACTFILE

**BRIEF:** London Symphony Orchestra tasked The Partners with creating an identity to celebrate the first season of new musical director Sir Simon Rattle that would be music to the ears of all concert-goers, not just classical aficionados.

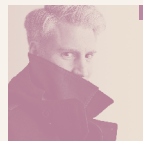
**CLIENT:** London Symphony Orchestra

**AGENCY:** The Partners, [www.the-partners.com](http://www.the-partners.com)

**COLLABORATOR:** Tobias Gremmler, [www.syncon-d.com](http://www.syncon-d.com)

**PROJECT DURATION:** 18 months

**LIVE DATE:** January 2017



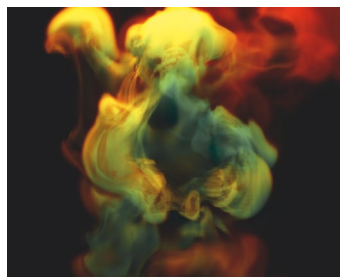
### STUART RADFORD

**UK creative director, The Partners**

Stuart started his career at Fitch before co-founding Radford Wallis in 1999, and then joining The Partners in 2011. He now heads the agency's London teams, where he's currently leading a project for European channel, Arte.



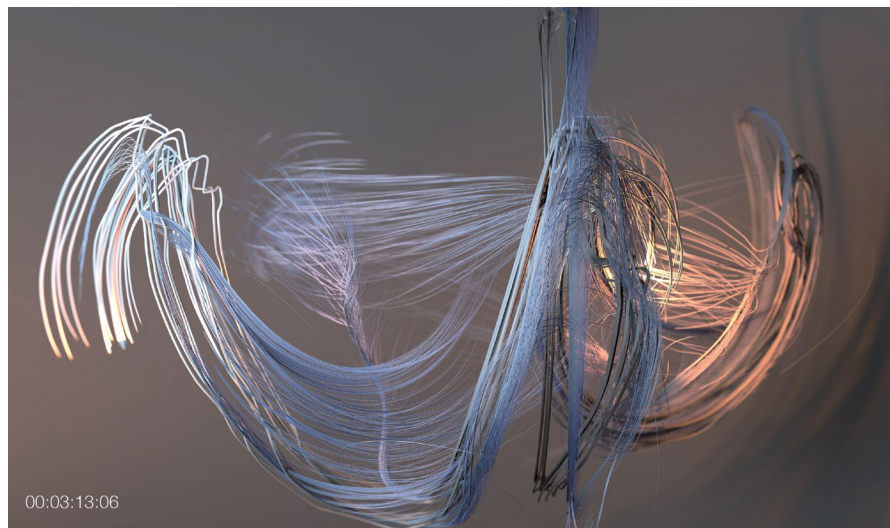
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## STRIKING THE RIGHT CHORD

Stuart Radford

When London Symphony Orchestra (LSO) first approached us in 2015, the team wanted to evolve the brand to coincide with Sir Simon Rattle's first season as musical director. The orchestra itself has always been progressive, so we felt there was permission to be a bit more innovative. LSO's performances are renowned for being visceral, powerful and emotional, so there was something interesting in the idea of it being an orchestra that was always moving – in both senses of the expression.

We did a comprehensive audit that looked at how LSO was communicating alongside the rest of the sector. The London orchestras all talked about themselves in relatively the same way – imagery was very static and traditional. If you know classical music, you'll see a picture of a conductor and you'll have an understanding of what they're like and therefore the type of experience you're going to have. But traditional representations of classical music can be a barrier for those without that prior knowledge. The LSO is keen to get people to experience classical music that wouldn't normally, and so there was a real opportunity with the appointment of Sir Simon Rattle.

## STUDYING SOUND

The starting point was the LSO marque; it was the only thing they were adamant they wanted to keep. Senior designer, Marc Spicer, and I felt like we could unpack it, and bring Sir Simon Rattle into the crux of the identity. When you see him conduct, it's very powerful. We wanted to create a way to capture the movement that is intrinsic in the creation of the music. The answer came from using motion capture. Last June, during rehearsals at the Barbican Centre, Sir Simon put on a motion capture suit and had a specially adapted baton that recorded his movements when he conducted various different excerpts from Elgar's Enigma variations.

When we discovered digital artist Tobias Gremmler's studies of the movement of Kung Fu artists, we knew he was right for the job. He treated the data with respect, but built

**01** Capturing the energy of the LSO was vital to the project, including in this new musician photography shoot by Ranald Mackechnie.

**02** Artist Tobias Gremmler morphed an Elgar variation into a heady plume of coloured smoke, keeping the colour palette warm to match the timbre.

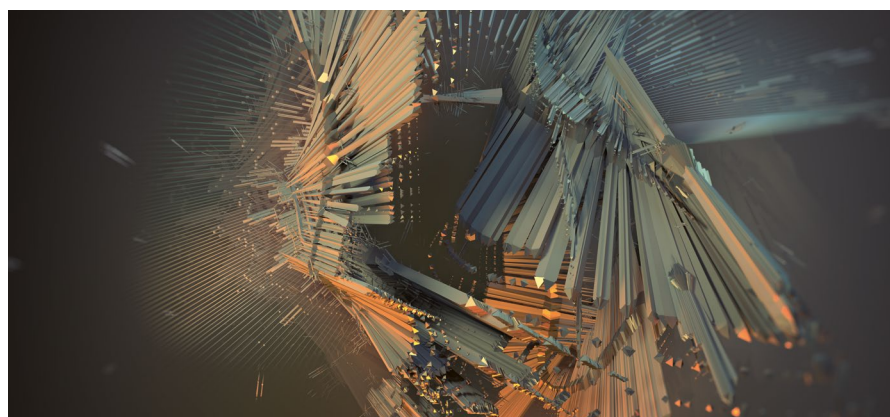
**03** LSO was keen to retain its iconic logo, which features a conductor in action. The Partners' identity also put the conductor at its heart.

**04** The University of Portsmouth and Vicon Motion Systems captured the movement of Sir Simon Rattle's conduction, giving Gremmler the data to visualise.





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**05 - 06** The look and feel of these visualisations of Sir Simon Rattle's movements are inspired by the qualities of the music.

**07** The Partners developed a typeface treatment that echoed the sweeping movements of the conductor of the music.

## MUSIC IN MOTION

**Artist Tobias Gremmler explains how he worked with the motion caption data collected by the University of Portsmouth**

To capture his movement, Sir Simon Rattle wore reflective pads stuck to a suit. The pads reflect infrared light, which the camera can extract very quickly from the rest of the image. Using footage from different perspectives, you can reconstruct the 3D position of every joint of the hands, elbows and shoulders. Once I had the data, first I looked at the footage to get a feel for the movement and to see where I could amplify interesting bits. Using a 3D package – the sort you'd use for 3D animations or 3D modelling – I created a skeleton of the conductor that defines all his joints, first in a hexagon shape and then for later visualisations, a more rounded version. I wanted to translate the outline like an audio wave travelling into space. I created a flat surface, and that starts to propagate up and down, like waves, and then evaporates into waves.

University of Portsmouth and Vicon Motion Systems help capture data from Sir Simon Rattle.



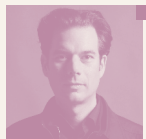
on it in an emotional way. We wanted to be true to Sir Simon's movements but also reflect the quality of the music – when it's a vigorous, intense piece, that's how his movements feel.

Tobias created six studies with different moods. One conveys the notion that it's the entire orchestra that creates the sound – it's an abstract interpretation of the different materials from the instruments, such as wood, brass, strings. Another is based solely on the strings – it's a string sculpture, where the strings that are playing glow in real time.

We chose three studies to create a short 40-second film. We wanted it to almost tell a little story: there's an explosive cacophony that then rolls gently into the movement of the next Elgar variation, the smouldering smoke builds, and then it gets so hot that wires come out of the heat, and almost melt into a sculpture.

From the visualisations, we created an identity that will be used on posters, online, on the season guide, for campaigns, and we're looking at creating backdrops to use at the Barbican and at LSO St Luke's.

We developed new type – it's a technique that's applied to a typeface as opposed to a font that we've created. The technique has two executions that capture the movements of Sir Simon – a fluid movement that almost carves the air, and an angular, more aggressive slice. The treatment makes the type feel like a serif font with the thin and thick parts of the cut throughs. It gives it a nice contrast between

**TOBIAS GREMMER****Digital artist**

Born in Munich but now based in Hong Kong, Tobias specialises in data visualisation but has worked on all number of digital projects for clients like Adidas, Apple, Sony Music, VW and Mazda. His recent visualisations of Kung Fu martial artists won him attention worldwide – including from The Partners.



08

modern and traditional, which feels right for what we're trying to achieve with the identity.

As the colours of the visualisations will change from one season to the next, we wanted a level of consistency – the copy is always white, as is the logo and logotype. Traditionally, the conductor always stands opposite his orchestra, so we reflect that in the position of the basic elements of the orchestra. We also rethought the photography of the orchestra. The joy of seeing people play is in the movement, and so the new photography captures the musicians' vibrant passion and energy.

**POSITIVE FEEDBACK**

The feedback we've seen has been very positive. There was an appetite within LSO to do something different, not only within the brand team, but within the members of orchestra. There's credit due to our client, LSO's Edward Appleyard and Karen Cardy. From the



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outset, we were trying to do something that hadn't been done before – both in terms of the motion capture of a conductor, and placing the conductor right at the heart of the whole visual identity. Hopefully the craft involved in the execution and the treatment of the idea makes it more accessible. The new identity is relevant to a wider audience, but at the same time does not dumb down the art form of classical music.

It's been a pleasure to work on this project – the subject matter is fascinating, and the client was brilliant at trusting in us and in the journey. With something like this you don't know what the end result will be until you have it, so there's a big leap of faith involved. Hopefully the client's bravery has been rewarded. ■

**08** The programme guide for the season uses static versions of Tobias Gremmler's animations.

**09 -10** Posters for the opening season. The plan is to develop colours and texture for subsequent seasons.

**11** The Partners is currently working on visualisations to be shown behind the orchestra as it performs.

**TOP TIPS****STAY IN TUNE**

**Stuart Radford's tips for design harmony**

**1. GIVE OTHERS SPACE**

I can be prescriptive, because I have a clear picture in my head of what we're trying to achieve, but there's a leap of faith you have to make when you collaborate. Try to give the artist as much space as possible.

**2. STRIP IT BACK**

We were very single-minded about the idea, and tried to stay as true to it as we could. Strip it back to the core idea – everything is influenced by Rattle's movements, from the imagery to the typeface.

**3. BRIDGE OLD AND NEW**

It can be hard to keep that connection between your new idea and an existing logo. We stayed true to the original marque. It was inspired by a conductor, so we placed it opposite the orchestra.



**Reed  
design  
writing  
Words.**

*Reed Words is a brand writing agency based in London, working across the globe with clients such as Skype, Disney, and London's National Theatre, as well as creative partners such as Mucho, FITCH and SomeOne. The work covers brand strategy, voice, campaigns, UX – you name it. Or get them to name it – Reed Words does that too.*

# WHY READ ABOUT WRITING?

Kicking off a new column series, **Reed Words** argues that designers and writers need to understand each other better



Identity for the Roundhouse, which Reed Words created with Magpie Studio

**T**he designer–writer partnership has produced some of the greatest creative work ever. Think of Apple's classic 'Think different' campaign: photography and words blending to create an effect that people still remember, decades later. Or there's Nike's swoosh, allied to 'Just do it'. Would either be as strong on its own?

As brand writers, we're almost always collaborating with designers. And when it goes well, it's a joy. One of our favourite recent projects has been working with Magpie Studio on the identity for the Roundhouse, London's landmark performance venue. There, the visual and the verbal became completely inseparable, with headlines written as virtuous circles.

Most of the time, this collaboration is marked by respect. But it can create a few headaches, too. Okay, a lot of headaches. Our temples start throbbing when we hear things like: 'I've just cut a few words to make it fit,' or: 'They need a punchy headline, it'll take you five minutes.' Designers, we imagine, feel equally queasy at comments like: 'It's three times as long as we agreed, but can't you change the font size?'

In the thick of a project, with deadlines looming, clients

'hmm-ing', and amends coming thick and fast, it's easy for both sides to retreat into simply defending their own territory. And that's no good for anyone. So how do we make things less frustrating, and more fruitful? This starts when writers and designers better understand – and better appreciate – each other's craft.

That's why we're writing this new column. Naturally, we hope to give interesting insights into the writing process (which doesn't get much of an airing usually). But we're also hoping those insights might help inspire closer, richer collaborations. Dream big, as they say.

So in the coming months, we'll lift the curtain on various 'writerly' topics – from finding the ideal name, to what makes UX writing different to print-based copywriting. We'll explain why writers sometimes put full stops and line breaks where you think they shouldn't, and maybe even unpick the mysteries of the Oxford comma. It all kicks off next month with one of the trickiest beasts in design writing: the headline. And if there are writing-based topics that you've always wondered about, tweet us @reedwords. We'll try to address those as we go along, too. ■

# NEXT MONTH

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# MASTER COLOUR THEORY IN BRANDING

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## INDUSTRY ISSUES

Reed Words reveals how to craft the right tone of voice for a brand

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**ON SALE 28 APR**





Veteran graphic designer **Lance Wyman** discusses how a sculpture may have influenced his iconic 1968 Olympics designs

## UNCLE OLMEC

**I had a strange experience in 1965 that makes me think my connection to Mexico started before I designed the graphics for the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City.**

It happened while I was working at the George Nelson office designing the graphics for the Chrysler Pavilion at the 1964-65 New York World's Fair. Prior to that I had lived in Zagreb, Yugoslavia (now Croatia), for three months, designing and supervising graphics for the USA Pavilion at the 1962 International Exposition.

After returning to New York, I received a postcard from Dr Cuk, a Zagreb professor and good friend, who worked at the USA Pavilion. He was planning a trip to New York and wondered if we could get together for lunch during his stay.

We exchanged postcards and decided to meet in front of the Seagram building on Park Avenue. I waited for Dr Cuk near a large stone sculpture in the front plaza of the building. It was a colossal head wearing what looked like a helmet of a ball player or a warrior. I felt it was pulling me in. I was being affected by a sculpture.

Earlier, at the World's Fair, I had been affected by Michaelangelo's white marble Pietà at the Vatican Pavilion. I got very emotional the first time I saw it. That surprised me, so I went through the pavilion for a second time, and the same



**Above: Lance Wyman with his Uncle Olmec in 2010. Below: Wyman with the same statue in 1964**

thing happened. That was an extremely powerful experience for me.

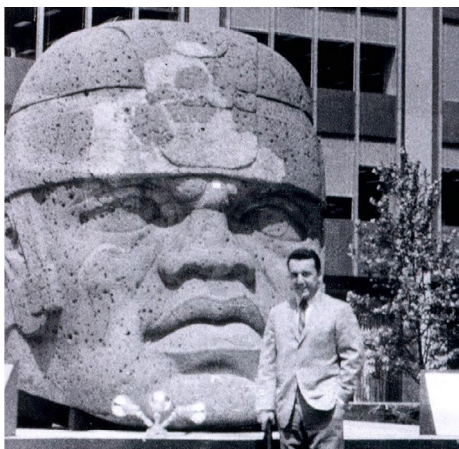
Meeting the big stone head was powerful, but it was a different kind of experience. It was a strange vibe, and very memorable. When Dr Cuk arrived, it was great to see him. After we'd had a friendly hug, I felt compelled to have him take a picture of me with the big head before we went to lunch. I've been obsessed with that big stone head ever since.

I later found out it was on loan from Mexico during the fair. It's an Olmec head carved some 3,000 years ago. Its permanent home is at the Museum of Archeology in Xalapa, Mexico. His official name is San Lorenzo Colossal Head 1, but I call him Uncle Olmec.

My first work in Mexico was the graphics for the 1968 Olympics. I went to Mexico City in November 1966 – with fellow designer Peter Murdoch, and my

wife Neila – as part of a competition to design the graphics for the Games. The only thing I knew about Mexico at that time was that they had piñatas and I had an Uncle Olmec. When I discovered the pre-Hispanic cultures, I felt at home. I think those early artisans created some of the strongest mythological, natural and geometric images that have been created anywhere. They were a big influence on our Olympic graphics, and as far as my contributions to that work are concerned, I can't help but think my Uncle Olmec was somehow helping me with the project.

I often wonder if in that first encounter, there was information in that stone head and somehow I was picking it up. It might be one of the reasons that Mexico has become so important for me. I'll probably never know, but I still keep his picture that Dr Cuk took, and I visit my Uncle Olmec in Xalapa whenever I have the chance. ■







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